

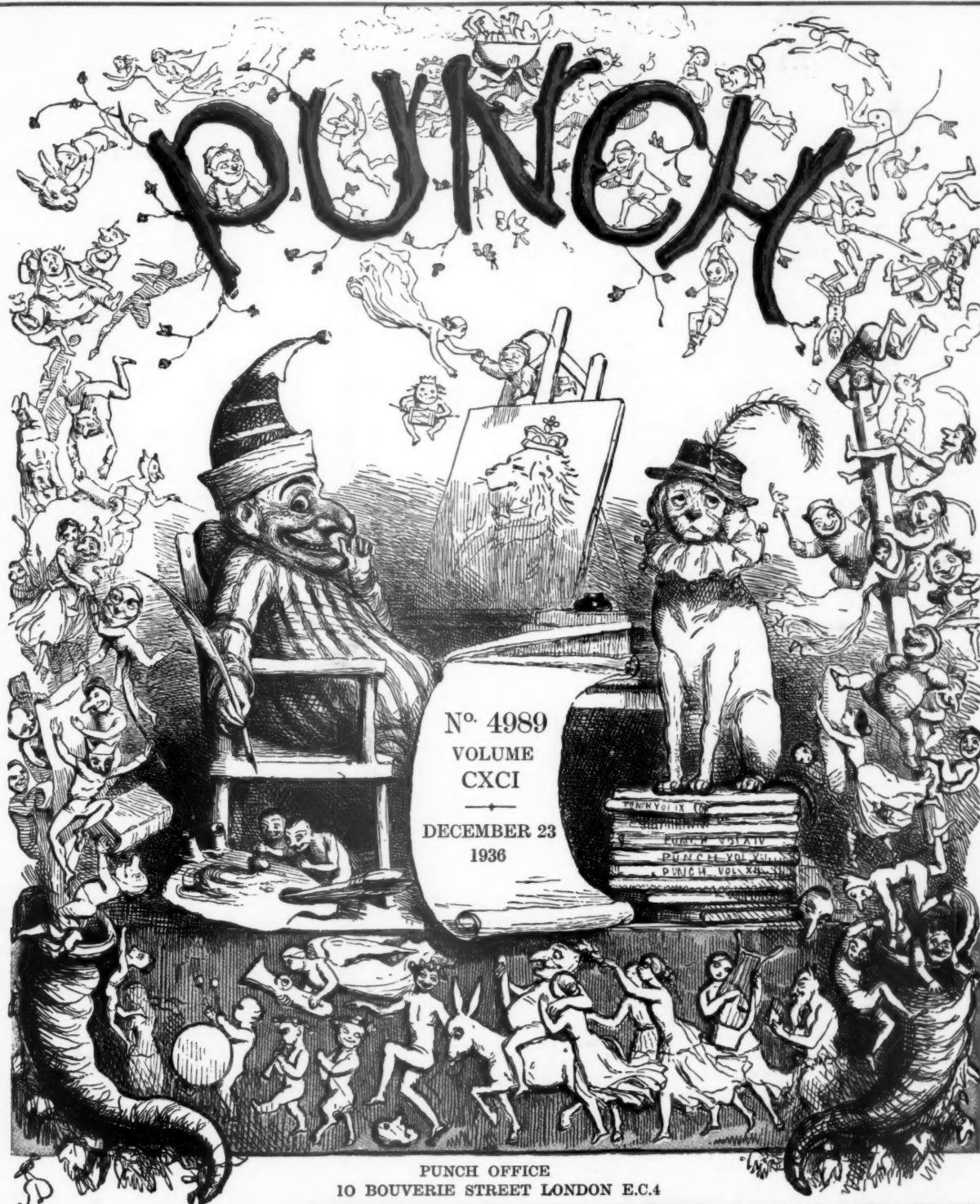
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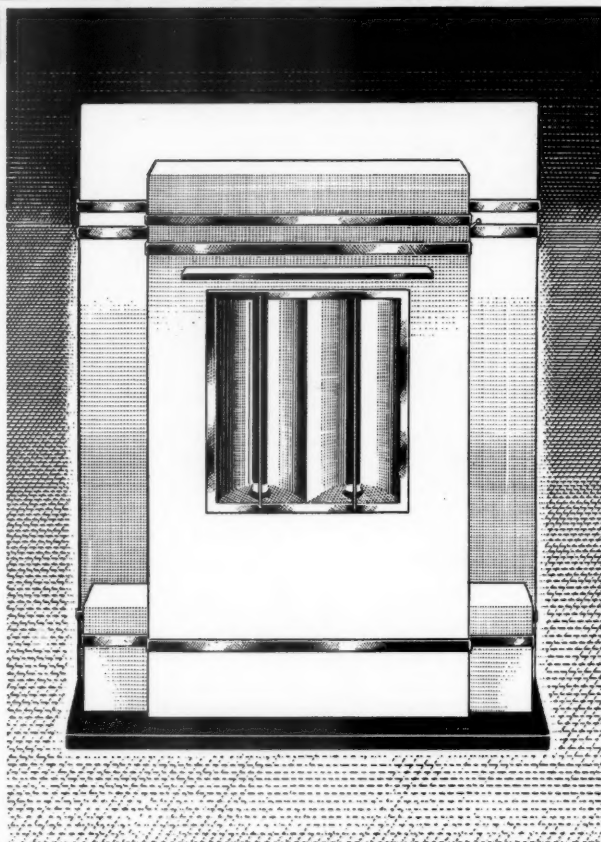
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Charivaria

A CORRESPONDENT says that his breakfast appetite is noticeably improved when he listens to Test Match commentaries from Australia. He likes almost everything except Hammond eggs.

★ ★ ★

How doth the Busy B.B.C.
Improve the Shining Hours
By adding to its Glorious Reith
Another Bunch of Flowers.

★ ★ ★

A man wanted for a smash-and-grab raid was arrested while having his shoes cleaned by a boot-black. The police refused to wait until he could show them a clean pair of heels.

★ ★ ★

According to one writer, HITLER intends to do everything that MUSSOLINI has done. HAILE SELASSIE is fortunately past worrying.

★ ★ ★



"You should wait half-an-hour after you stop work before you start your lunch," decrees a doctor. In the restaurant that we chiefly patronise this decree has been in force for quite a long time.

★ ★ ★

A traveller who has just returned from the Continent says that little English is to be heard there. The French, it seems, are still speaking quite a lot of French.

★ ★ ★

Captain Hook is what actors call a fat part. Dare we add that this is particularly true this year?

★ ★ ★

A scientist is endeavouring to produce ink from a plant. In the same way several thousand people will shortly be trying to produce it from their Christmas-present fountain-pens.



A Leicestershire man has been summoned for throwing eggs at a Communist speaker. He shouldn't have done that with eggs at their present price.

★ ★ ★

LEON TROTSKY has been invited to settle down in Mexico. It is thought that the invitation comes from Norway.

★ ★ ★

Before it is publicly announced, may we mention that the number of parcels dealt with by the Post Office this Christmas will be a record.

★ ★ ★

A contemporary wonders what happens to old worn-out telephone- and telegraph-poles. There is a rumour that they are used as Scottish Christmas-trees.

★ ★ ★

There are fewer train accidents than car accidents. Some people hold that this is because engine-drivers are not in the habit of putting their arms round firemen's waists.

★ ★ ★

A writer wonders when turkey will lose its appeal as the staple Yuletide dish. The answer of course is on Boxing Day.

★ ★ ★

Carol-singers performed on a suburban railway platform recently. The whole point of this paragraph is that one of the listeners refrained from making a joke about the waits.

★ ★ ★

It is amazing how a mob will follow a man, no matter where he may be leading them, remarks a psychologist. And the moral is, no doubt, that if only they would patronise the Tote they wouldn't need to.



Horrible Outlook for Uncles

ALL the signs point to the fact that this is going to be a Practical Joke Christmas. For weeks the shop-windows have been full of explosive cigars, hawkers are doing a roaring trade in unstrikeable matches, while, to judge from a Catalogue of Novelties which has come into my possession (and from which I shall take the liberty of quoting), some of the finest brains in the country have devoted months of patient thought and care to the production of really Original and Sensational Surprises.

So gather round me, children, while I tell you how to make life hideous for Uncle.

First of all I want to warn you against the all-too-common mistake of dissipating your energies. Again and again I have seen beginners at the game simply throw away the enormous possibilities of a good set of Jokes by spreading them over too wide a field. It is tempting, I know, to drench Aunt Agatha with the Camera Squirt, frighten Mother with the Bloodstained Finger-Bandage (very realistic), and then to run off and try the Broken Mirror Illusion on Dad, but at the end of it all where are you? Nobody's hurt, nobody's in hysterics, even Aunt Agatha has only got to change her blouse. At the best you've had three loud laughs for your trouble.

Never forget that the whole point and purpose of the Practical Joke is to make your victim jump. The bigger the jump, the bigger the laugh. And why do people jump? Because they're nervous. There you are, that's the secret of the whole thing in a nutshell. The more nervous your victim is, the more satisfactory the results will be. So the first aim of every Joker must be to select one particular person and work him up into a thoroughly nervous condition.

You may have wondered why so often the advice given at the end of the Instructions for using a Joke is "Try it on Uncle." I'll tell you. It is because experienced Jokers have learnt this lesson of Concentration and want to help you to take the same easy road to success. Make "Try it on Uncle" your slogan. Try everything on Uncle. Get him on the run. Cause him, to borrow a technicality of the trade, endless consternation. Don't let up on him for an instant, and before the evening's half over you'll have him jumping clean up to the ceiling if you so much as offer him a cigarette. Why, I've known a man—quite a big strong man he was too at the beginning of the party—reduced to such a state of quivering terror by really intelligent handling that he fainted right away at such a stale old trick as the Exploding Chocolate (it goes off with a bang, you will remember, when placed in the mouth). Heavens, how we roared at the look on his face when he came round and we handed him some brandy in the Collapsible Tumbler!

And now I suppose you'll all be wanting to know how you can get the same results at a moderate expenditure.

A heavy outlay is quite unnecessary *provided* you keep clearly in mind, when making your purchases, what it is you have set out to do. Don't waste money on novelties which, however attractive in themselves, have no demoralising tendencies and are therefore for your purpose useless. A set of celluloid teeth with moustache attached may make you popular at parties, but, like the Conjuring Outfit and the Magic Nose Flute, they cost money and must be sternly resisted. Popularity isn't everything, and the Practical Joker will do well to eschew all thought of it. Stick to the essentials.

It is quite a good plan to start operations before your victim has got properly into the house. There is a splendid whistle on the market this year which makes (to quote my

catalogue) "an ear-splitting, soul-harrowing, nerve-shattering noise with which nothing in nature can compare." Why not get behind a bush and blow this as Uncle Jack comes up the drive? It will take the edge off his complacency and put him into a receptive mood for the jet of water which strikes his eye as he presses the Imitation Bell-push (Just like the Real Thing, 1/6). Or you might try the Novelty Boot-Scraper, which emits a loud hiss when touched and is particularly effective, as it catches the victim on one leg and may throw him off his balance. Nothing starts an evening off better than a heavy fall.

Indoors an almost infinite variety of possibilities present themselves. The Collapsible Hat-Peg, the Trick Ink-Bottle and the Surprise Fountain-Pen are obvious choices, and wherever possible the Broken Egg Joke (Indistinguishable from Real) and the Whoopee Cushion, which makes "indescribable noises" when sat on, should be used. It is impossible to advise a definite selection or sequence of Jokes, for individual circumstances must always be taken into account, but in general it is a good rule to preface the most shattering surprises with two or three of the milder kinds of fun. This breaks up the patient's nerve in an astonishing way. Thus, suppose Uncle Jack has just found the Broken Egg on his waistcoat immediately after removing the Celluloid Spider from his soup. He takes a drink from the Dribbling Glass to cover his confusion. Now is the time to hand him the Joke Banana, which shoots out a ferocious-looking serpent when pressed. After that he will probably refuse all the genuine food offered him, which is screamingly funny to those in the know.

There is a difference of opinion even among experts as to the best means of administering the *coup de grâce* when you have tired of the evening's sport. Some advocate a good dose of Itching Powder, followed up with an application of one of the many excellent water-squirting devices. Others prefer the Dissolving Chair (Watch Uncle's face when he sits down further than he intended!). For myself I doubt very much whether you can do better than a combination of a good exploding cigar and the sure-fire Rubber Tarantula, which is well described in the catalogue as "the most hideous-looking object that we have ever seen." The moment Uncle opens his eyes after the explosion dangle this lifelike spider in front of him. The sudden shock is almost certain to produce insensibility. With luck it may even kill him.

If it does, I hope he will haunt you.

H. F. E.

At an Oxford Sherry-Party

JEREZ! I ought to see a town
White 'neath a sky of indigo,
With terraced vineyards climbing down
Into the purple plains below.

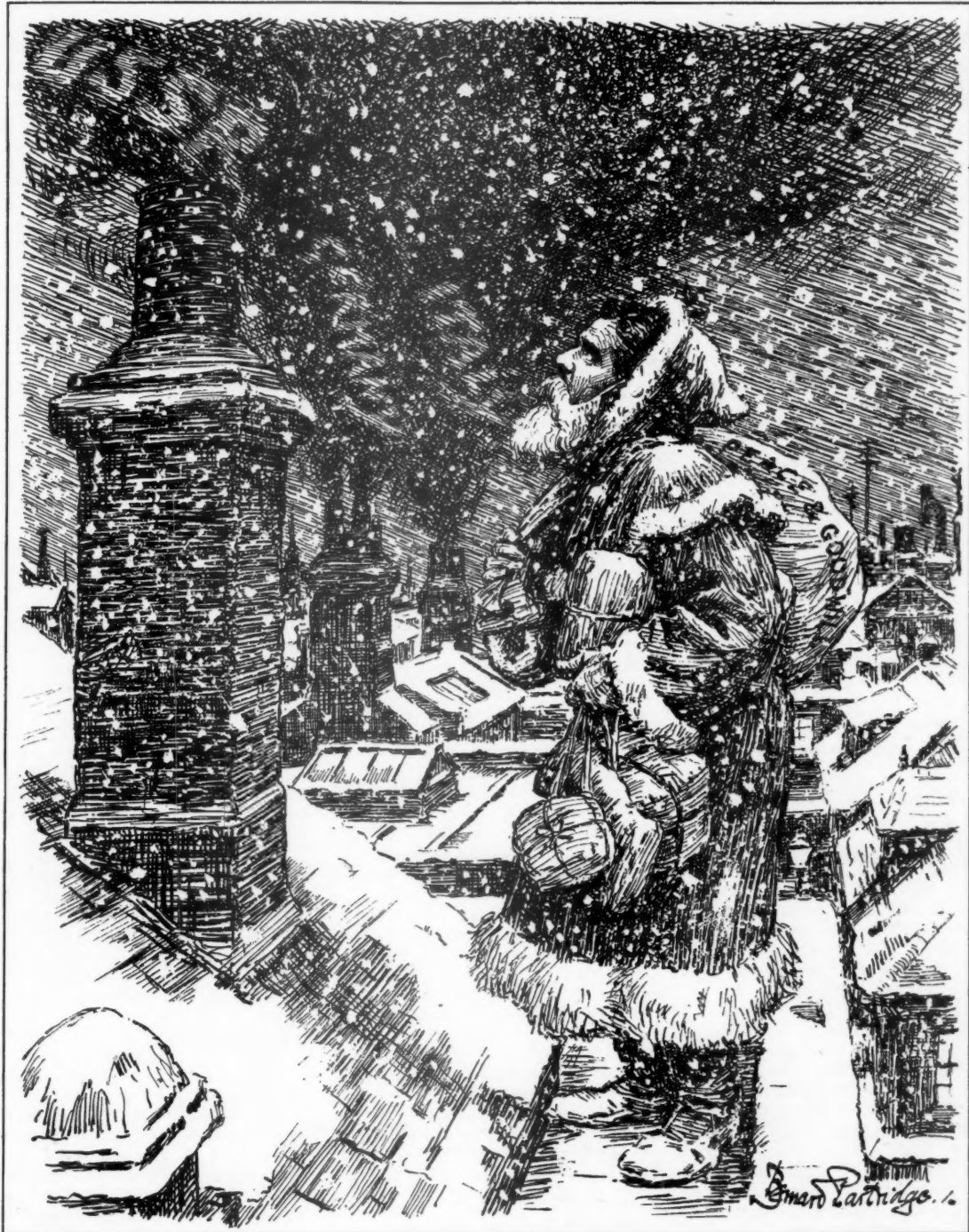
Green vine-leaves where the soil is red,
And, like the snow in primavera,
Crowning the blue sierra's head,
Jerez de la Frontera!

Jerez, whatever fate be thine,
That picture in my heart remains
As we sit sipping sherry-wine
And talk of tamer dons than Spain's.

"FIRST BABY." Continuous Evening Performance."

Cinema Advt.

Performance not guaranteed to stop at midnight.



SMOKE OVER EUROPE

SANTA ANTHONY. "WELL, I DO THINK THEY MIGHT HAVE THE DECENCY TO LET THEIR FIRES DOWN JUST THIS ONCE."

Meanwhile, down in the street — [See next Cartoon]



"HAVEN'T YOU ANYTHING ELSE OF DICKENS?"

"Seadromes on Air Routes"

THE air-folk, not content with threatening our lives, continue to devastate the language. That horrid heading caught my eye in my dear *Observer*. Below was an interesting and imaginative article by the Rt. Hon. F. E. GUEST on the "seadromes" or "floating islands" which are to be placed in mid-ocean for the comfort and supply of aircraft. "Floating island" is good; but must we have the mongrel and meaningless "seadrome"? It does not even fit logically into the horrid vocabulary of the flying folk. The absurd word "drome" no longer means a "run" or a place where something goes round and round; it is now any odd sort of place which those responsible find it difficult to describe. (I must mention in passing my old friends "aquadrome" and "fundrome.") The hateful "air-drome" is a place where people enter or leave the air. So a sea-drome (if there is any logic in the Drome School) ought to mean a place where people enter or leave the sea. But it doesn't. It means another

air-drome—an ocean air-drome, a deep-water drome; and, supposing that one could for a moment think of admitting such dromeries into the society of decent words, these descriptions would at least be more sensible than sea-drome.

But *must* we submit to dromery? Why not "ocean air-port"? Your homework this week will be to devise a good short description of the "floating islands." It is difficult, I know; but do not be deterred. For I see dromery developing dangerously. If we are not careful we shall have the buses stopping at bus-dromes: "Demonstrations" and "Movements" will mass at rally-dromes. The Church Assembly will be known as a Dean-drome. Billingsgate will be a fish-drome and Covent Garden a music-drome. O dear! A. P. H.

A Wireless Petition To the British Broadcasting Corporation

MAY it please your Excellencies to receive the humble petition of a Listener resident in Longitude 35° E, Latitude 1° S.

I have a grievance; I write on behalf of your Listeners, owners of receiving sets only, who live and listen in this area. We have a grievance.

Perhaps you will recollect that one morning not long ago you varied and extended your "Good-night, everybody—good-night," on Transmission No. 6, intended, I believe, for Western Canada, by a sudden unexpected "Good-morning" to those of us here, to those at breakfast in India, and to those at sea—you did not say what they might be doing. This, we all felt, was Official Recognition; previously we had felt rather as if we were eavesdroppers. It gave us courage.

May it please your Excellencies to consider the Listeners resident in Latitude 1° S, Longitude 35° E. We like to pick up the News Bulletin sent out at 3.40 A.M. G.M.T.; it hits us at 6.10 A.M. local time—our sunrise all the year round. We like all your News Bulletins; they serve especially as a corrective to our only alternative regular news, beyond the reach of daily papers as we are, the British Official Wireless Press items, by assuring us that there are events in Europe other than speeches by Mr. ANTHONY

EDEN, and political forces at work other than negative. Of our own beam, Transmission No. 4, which reaches us comfortably just after dinner at night, we have nothing to complain.

But please consider what happens daily just before the bulletin at 3.40 A.M.—6.10 A.M., that is to say. The night is passing; "Dawn's left hand" is well up into the sky; we step out on to the verandah for a breath of cool morning air; we turn eastwards to see the sun with equatorial punctuality lifting his bright orb of light over the far horizon, under a sky-canopy of rose and gold, melting to blue. We do silent homage direct to his beauty. We turn to the south to see the purple hills splashed with aureolin fire. We turn westward, on the not-through-eastward-windows-only principle, to find the canopy a dome of infinite radius, with ourselves at the mathematical centre.

Then we go indoors to tune in G.S.C. or G.S.D., according to our fancy or the performance of our set. That moment makes or mars the day for us. We can hardly avoid hearing the last few minutes of the almost inevitable concert before the News, especially when you are a trifle late with the News. The day's crisis has arrived. Will it be a BACH fugue? Or a CHOPIN mazurka? Or a song by

BRAHMS or SCHUBERT? Something in sympathy with the sunrise? Or will it be 'Arry 'Orp and his Orpingtons crashing through the ether, distorting the Heavyside layer, shattering our nervous system with syncopated, belching, hideous noise?

It is all very well for you to laugh, Mr. Announcer. You are not obliged to hear it. Moreover, you are still under the pall of night, which will probably lift to reveal a London fog later on. In your circumstances it might even please you to be asked, as one of your gangsters asked me this morning, whether I would love her as mutton as I did now she was lamb. You might respond sympathetically to the doubtful claim that "even a crooner is somebody's child." But in Longitude 35° E, Latitude 1° S this sort of thing spoils the day's work on the farm. It makes us angry with the milkers, scornful of the men weeding the pyrethrum, and peevish with the women picking coffee. The only work we feel fit for after whacking the dogs is to take out a 50 h.p. caterpillar tractor and drag a wretched decorticator through the sisal—if you call that work.

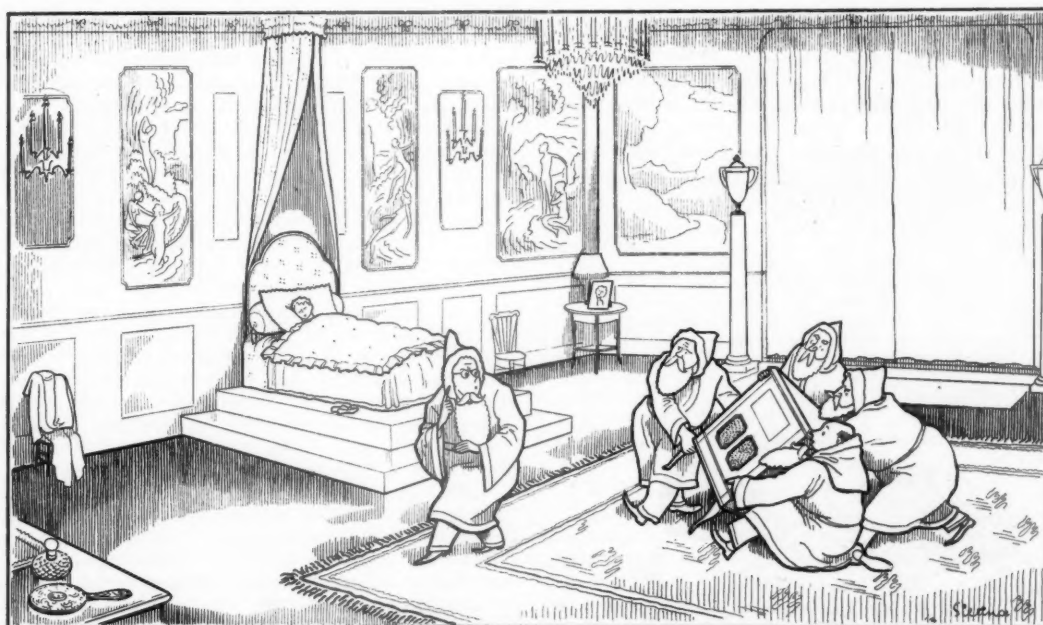
Now we know that Transmission No. 6 is not our beam and we do not want to interfere with Western Canada's midnight revels, but the Canadians, our fellow-citizens of the Empire,

will surely not grudge five minutes on "jazz" nights and will allow you to stifle the performers at 3.35 A.M. G.M.T., or to switch off the electrical-recording apparatus. Then you will be able to gain our lasting gratitude by at least putting on some blameless, merciful, neutral gramophone record till 3.40. Any old worn one will do—"Londonderry Air," for instance—we could stand that; or KREISLER's "Caprice Viennoise." I have not consulted my friends on the point, but I venture to suggest that even something by KETELBY would be acceptable in the circumstances. . . .

. . . for which your Petitioners will ever pray.

A Nutty Problem

James spent the greater part of life In cracking walnuts for his wife. Sadly he asked himself, "Can this Be *all* that's meant by married bliss?" So it went on till in the end He took his troubles to a friend. His friend replied, "Though yours is not Perhaps a very happy lot, Many a man has greater ills; My wife eats nothing but brazils." M. H.



SANTA-DE-LUXE; OR, A PRESENT FOR THE JUVENILE STAR

We Can But Marvel

"THESE," said the Managing Director, scrabbling irritably among the papers on his desk, "seem to be all about people I never heard of in my life before. Enticott!"

"Sir?" said his secretary anxiously.

"How is it I never heard of any of these people before? Mr. Glossop brings in particulars of half-a-dozen people from whom I am expected to choose his successor when he becomes Assistant Managing Director; and the only man of the lot I know anything about is this fellow Vince or Vance, and he seems to come up for promotion every time, no matter what the vacancy is. Why have I never promoted him, Enticott?"

"He's no good at anything," Enticott said.

"No more he is, I remember now. And why is it he keeps being put forward?"

"He deserves promotion, Mr. Carruthers," said Glossop earnestly. "Always smart, always neatly shaved, alert, respectful, most systematic, a lover of efficiency methods, puts in overtime—"

"You recommend him?"

"Well," said Glossop—"well. He's the type that gets to the top, according to what the advertisements say."

"Brainy, eh?" The managing director was reading about Vance or Vince on a sheet of paper and did not notice the awkwardness of the pause that followed this remark. Then he suddenly choked and looked up. "Dispatch Department!" he said hoarsely. "Wasn't this fellow the fellow that had a couple of tons of stuff for the South of France sent to Iceland?"

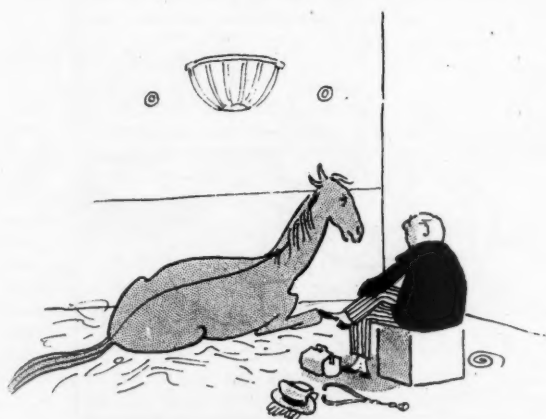
"Well, yes—in a way," said Glossop.

Enticott slid open a file-drawer and said briskly, "Yes, the load followed Mr. Sanderson all over North Europe for fourteen weeks. The bill—"

"We agreed, you remember, Mr. Carruthers," said Glossop, "that it would be quite contrary to commercial ethics to discharge so smart and deserving an employee on account of—"

"Nevertheless," said the managing director, putting aside the sheet of paper, "I doubt whether he would do. It seems to me that the obvious choice is this fellow Choggle or Chuggle."

"Chiggle? You mean the man who doesn't shave?"



"WE'RE NOT GIVING OUR LIVER A CHANCE, YOU KNOW."

The managing director took his pince-nez off sharply. "Doesn't what, Glossop?"

"Doesn't shave, Mr. Carruthers. It's well known in the office. He doesn't shave."

"Has he a beard, then?"

"Oh, no. He just remains unshaven. It's my belief he runs over his face now and again with a pair of nail-scissors."

"Then kindly tell me how he has got where he is?"

"Well, Sir," said Glossop gloomily, "it's like this. He does the work well."

"Does the work well?"

"Perfectly, Mr. Carruthers, I'm afraid—perfectly. Never a thing wrong with the work."

"That seems exceedingly peculiar," said the managing director. "Did you hear that, Enticott?"

"Yes, Mr. Carruthers," said Enticott, baffled. "It comes as a bombshell to me."

"Nothing should come as a bombshell to you, Enticott," said the managing director sharply. "You should be abreast of every development in this firm and keep me abreast of it. This is an absolutely unprecedented situation, an outbreak of savagery, a reversal of the laws of business progress, and it finds me at a loss because you allow it to find you at a loss. Nothing should find you at a loss, Enticott. . . . Send for Chiggle. I propose to tax him with not shaving."

Enticott took his telephone and in a low sad voice asked for Chiggle. Two seconds after he had replaced the receiver the door opened and Chiggle lounged in: a lanky, shabby, bright-eyed man with yellow-stained fingers.

"Afternoon, boss," he said, taking a white rat out of his pocket.

"Don't call me boss."

"O.K.," said Chiggle amiably.

A silence fell. Chiggle fondled his rat. There came a thud on the door and a face appeared: "Buluwayo on the wire, Mr. Chiggle."

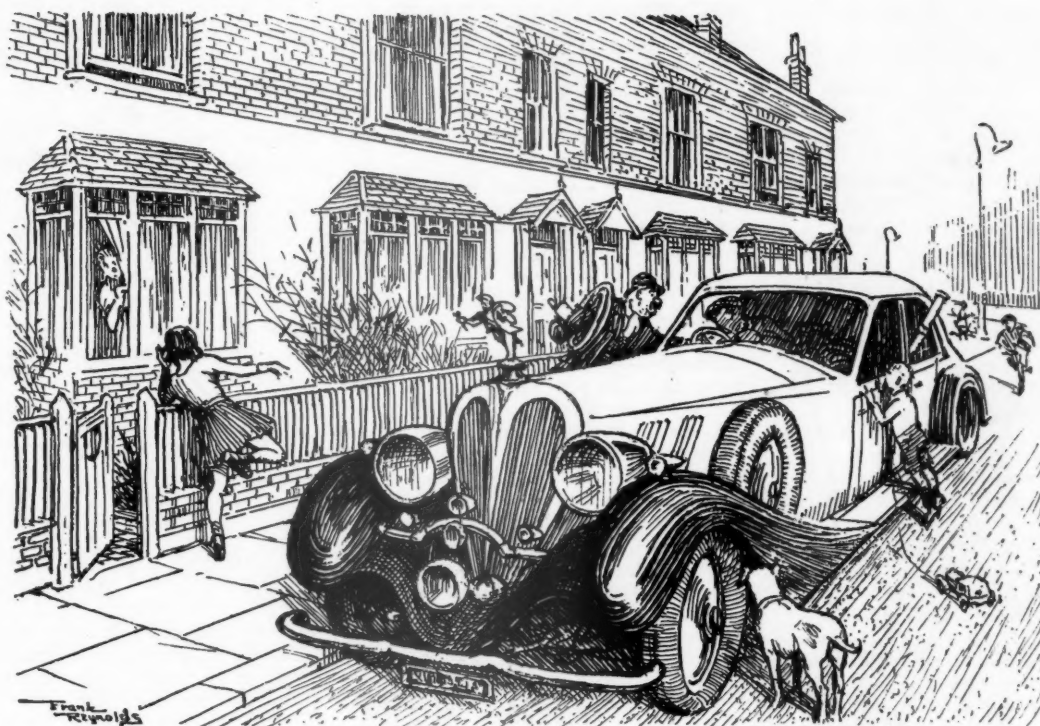
A shudder ran over everyone except Chiggle and the rat. The word "Buluwayo" symbolised a series of most delicate business negotiations involving a lot of money. Chiggle was not worried. Dropping the rat into his pocket he said, "Pardon me if I use your phone," and sat on the edge of the managing director's desk as he lifted the receiver. "Hey," he mumbled into the telephone. "Put Buluwayo through here. Yes. Ah, Buluwayo? Yes, I did ask you to call us. Certainly I did. Yes. No. Must be a set of bone-heads. Who?"

The managing director sat with his eyes popping. Glossop rubbed his chin deprecatingly. Enticott had taken his own telephone and was listening suspiciously to the other side of the conversation.

"Yes, here," said Chiggle, pulling out a tattered envelope and reading from it. "Two-hundred-and-fifty thousand. Yes. No, thirty. Yes? Well, there never were more than seven. Seven. Yes. O.K. Certainly you can, if you like to spend the money." He replaced the receiver and sneezed. "They're going to cable for confirmation," he said to the managing director. "Better let me handle that. Nobody else knows the full particulars."

"The full particulars are on file," said Enticott coldly. Chiggle said, "That's what you think. They only go up to September 27." Enticott verified this just as the managing director found his voice and said, "B-Buluwayo? You mean to tell me you've settled that? Who gave you permission?"

"Nobody," said Chiggle. "It hadn't been settled in the last ten weeks so I decided to settle it. I knew they'd fall if we went at 'em the right way. Come out of there, blast you," he added to the white rat, which had run down his



"'S ORL RIGHT, MUM—'S ONLY THE PLUMBERS."

leg and was rooting through the sides of the waste-paper-basket.

"Er—Chiggle," the managing director stiffened his face somewhat, "did you shave this morning?"

"No," said Chiggle absently. "What made you think of that?" There came another thud on the door and a different face was poked in: "Please, Mr. Chiggle, we want the date of that Collins interview—"

"July 12 last year," said Chiggle instantly. He then turned to the managing director: "Was there anything you wanted? I'm a bit busy in there. They rely on me a lot."

The managing director cleared his throat several times and presently said, "Er—no."

"O.K.," Chiggle said. "Here, Rover." The rat ran up his leg and he slouched out of the door.

"Two days' beard," Glossop remarked disapprovingly. "The picture of inefficiency. Not at all a type to encourage, if you ask me, Mr. Carruthers."

"I profoundly agree with you, Glossop. Nevertheless Chiggle will have to be your successor."

"But, Mr. Carruthers, it's flying in the face of—"

"Glossop," said the managing director, "if Providence in its inscrutable wisdom has seen fit to bestow brains on a man who will not shave regularly, we can but marvel, Glossop, and submit. Did you take that down, Enticott?"

"Yes, Sir—all but the Glossops. Did you want the Glossops taken down?"

"No, Enticott, you may omit the Glossops."

That was a year ago, and now Chiggle is said to be in the running for the post of Assistant Managing Director. It

is thought probable that he will be promoted over the heads of people who have been shaving regularly for years. R. M.

The Real Problem

"A NATIONAL CRISIS"

This country at the present moment is facing a crisis of first-class importance, the outcome of which is awaited with no small degree of anxiety. Unless a satisfactory conclusion is reached within a few days the consequences will undoubtedly be serious. Failure will inevitably lead to chaos and confusion; and there are certain foreign countries that are always watching very closely what is taking place in Britain, and ever ready to turn our mistakes and our misfortunes to their own advantage. A fortnight ago it was not known—at least not outside a very small circle—that there was anything amiss; to-day the question is whether it will be possible to avert disaster.

The first intimation the public had that ail was not well was the announcement, last week, that the pig producers had not contracted for the minimum number of pigs required, under the 1937 contract, to ensure that the Pigs Marketing Scheme will continue."

Leading Article in a Weekly Farming Paper of Dec. 12th.

Perhaps this will teach you not to leap to conclusions.

A Bird Note

"The prettiest sight for a long time was on the Liverpoold Sewage Farm this week (writes 'E. H.'), where an almost pure white specimen of a pied wagtail has been frequenting."—Daily Paper.

Were I a water-wagtail pied,
And free of all the countryside,
With feet for earth and wings for heaven,
I'd go to Cornwall or to Devon.
I wouldn't stay, like a silly foodl,
On a sewage farm at Liverpoold.

At the Pictures

STAN, OLLIE, GORDON AND MAE.

IN spite of many rumours, or I might even say threats, of disintegration, the old firm of LAUREL and HARDY still, to the delight of thousands, remains intact. But I think the



J.H.D.

A DOUBLES ENTENTE

Bert OLIVER HARDY
Alf STAN LAUREL

partners would be wise to dispense with their full-length pictures, such as *Our Relations*, and return to their old short-lengths. I think of them in terms of twenty minutes, not of an hour-and-a-half. In twenty minutes their personalities can be fully developed, pleasantly satisfying their old patrons and sufficiently amusing the newcomer; and at the close nearly everyone can be ready for more. But an hour-and-a-half of LAUREL and HARDY—or shall I, like the rest of the world, call them STANLEY and OLIVER, or, to express the fullest familiarity, STAN and OLLIE?—an hour-and-a-half of STAN and OLLIE is too much. This is especially the case when, as in *Our Relations*, there are two STANS, two OLLIES, for, to complete its idiocies, the plot requires twins, and we therefore have the big, comfortable, fat man (HARDY), with all his incorrigible impulses and foolish eagernesses, his delicate hands and his unctuous smile, twice over, once as his reputable married self, and once as his double, Bert, the dissolute sailor brother; and twice over we have the melancholy surprised LAUREL, once unlearning as ever, and, as ever, true to a hat too small to fit, married and a ratepayer, and once as his double, the dissolute sailor, Alf.

Between these four, who, thanks to the ingenuity of the camera and the producer, are often "on" together, the

audience may be forgiven if they are lost, as I confess that I often was. All films with doubles—even the new ARLISS film—tend to perplex; and I fancy there should now be a close time for them. For, in defiance of the old saying, too much of a good thing, even of STAN and OLLIE, is possible.

Although they make their films in America, to old England, I understand, belongs the honour of these comedians' birth; and GORDON HARKER is a home-made comedian too, with an ever-increasing following; but so far, I believe, he has been true to the British studio. I doubt if Hollywood could change his manner, or would wish to, but it might provide him with better material, or at any rate with better support. We are a conservative people who, having selected our favourites, like those favourites not to change; but I should prefer to see GORDON HARKER doing rather more than utter "refained" cynical comments on his fellows, agreeable though his dry Society tones can be. But I doubt if I ever shall, and, that being the case, there is nothing to hope for but worthier settings for his humour. Nothing less funny than the Turkish bath scene in *Millions* can I remember.



J.H.D.

TWO SCHOOLS OF THOUGHT

Aunt Kate . . . ELIZABETH PATTERSON
Mavis Arden . . . MAE WEST

Even before a visitor, fully dressed for the street, contrives to enter the hottest room, it was a strain to laugh; but to anyone with respect for the sanctity of such a place this invasion fosters rather than removes gravity. But I was glad as well as surprised to see the grotesque acrobat of LESLIE HENSON's plays, RICHARD HEARNE,

taking a part as a normal young lover. Even in this rôle, however, he cannot be prevented from diving through a window once.

And now for a great American movie star who, I am afraid, twinkles and diffuses rays not as she did: MAE WEST. This capacious lady still voluptuously



J.H.D.

SOCIAL FOREGROUND

Otto Forbes GORDON HARKER

sighs, still moves with much of the old sensuous sinuosity, still bends on her prey the glances of desire or conquest; but something is lacking. I feel it to be time that this risqué comedienne should find an author to provide her with a story more suited to her maturing gifts, because no one seeing the present film can accept the star's fascination for all who meet her in the flesh. If they cannot, the film fails, since the whole story is of that fascination. MAE WEST, as the irresistible queen of the stage, moving in her car from one theatre to another, has a break-down and is forced to stay at a boarding-house, where her interrupted career as a heart-breaker in cities can be temporarily resumed among hicks. This is called *Go West, Young Man*, a title in which those of us who are not too dumb will discern a double meaning. I cannot pretend to be a young man any longer, but I feel that I have gone WEST as far as I need. E. V. L.

A Christmas Suggestion

CHARING CROSS Hospital has engaged the Piccadilly Theatre for five weeks at Christmas to stage *What's Become of the Fairies?* a play with a cast of seventy-five, most of them children, which is described as "an adventure for children of all ages." Mr. Punch hopes that this brave new venture will bring entertainment to thousands of his readers and much-needed funds to the Hospital.

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Christmas, 2036

THE Christmas of 2036 was the first after the passing of the Christmas (Merrie England) Regulation Act (2036), which sought to ensure that everybody in the land should be equally merry at the festive season. To this end the populace was divided into groups of twenty on an area basis, and the twenty drew lots as to which family should be host. In Acacia Road, Snuggleton, for instance, the inhabitants of "Mon Repos," "Balmoral," "Nicouse," "The Firs" and "End Cottage" amounted to just twenty-one, so Zachariah Smith of "End Cottage" was carried forward to the next area, and the rest drew lots. Professor Gangrene of "The Firs" was the host, and a good time was had by all, or would have been had by all if Professor Gangrene had not unfortunately been a vegetarian, a teetotaler and a man who detested children.

On Christmas Eve the Government Catering Department delivered at his house a great many parcels, containing Christmas Cheer for twenty. With the aid of his old housekeeper he opened the parcels, poured all the alcohol down the drain, buried the turkeys in the garden and burned the paper caps in the grate. If it had not been for this and the fact that Mr. Green of "Nicouse" was not on speaking terms with Mr. Smith of "End Cottage" and that Mrs. Harper of "Mon Repos" considered Mrs. Stewart of "Balmoral" low, a good time would without the slightest doubt have been had by all.

The clause dealing with Carol Singing met with a rather mixed reception. All parties of carol singers had to be registered and undergo a test. They were also instructed to sing certain specified carols in a certain specified order. "Good King Wenceslas," for instance, was banned altogether on the grounds that it might encourage cruelty to children, the page therein being unnecessarily exposed to the risk of chilblains in order to assist his master in an errand that would have been quite superfluous in a well-organised state. But once a party of carol-singers had passed the test, all householders were obliged not only to listen to them but to provide wassail and to invite the singers into their houses on Christmas Eve with cheerfully hospitable smiles. In those parts of England where the Registrar of Carols was a stern and acute critic the plan worked well, but unfortunately in Snuggleton the job was given to a good-natured old fellow with a warm



"CRACKERS, RUSSELL, FOR MR. DAVIDSON"

heart and no ear for music. As it was also enacted that parties of carollers should all follow the same route at regular intervals the congestion in Acacia Avenue was terrible. Owing to the number of parties, a five-minute interval had been fixed, starting at five P.M., and as the carollers were forced to sing five carols, taking in all twenty minutes, "End Cottage" by seven o'clock was packed tight with carollers drinking poor Mr. Smith's wassail, while he welcomed more and more of them at the door with a slightly worn hospitable smile. By nine o'clock every house in Acacia Avenue was packed tight with tight carollers, except "The Firs," where Professor Gangrene had illegally removed the alcohol from his wassail and substituted castor-oil, thus laying himself open to severe penalties.

Even the magnificent Government

machine, however, broke down in the effort to distribute Christmas presents on a national scale. Everybody certainly got some sort of present, but it was felt by the more captious critics that more care might have been taken in the selection of the gifts. A book entitled *Some Reflections on Bloggs' Analysis of Hogg's Exposure of Einstein's Theory of Relativity* was felt to be rather heavy reading for little Pamela Brown, aged six months, and Professor Gangrene got no particular thrill out of his toy aeroplane and teddy bear with eyes that opened and closed.

Chinks in their Armour?

"In a statement issued in Dublin last night he says it becomes necessary for the Chinese nations of the world to take serious notice of the position if the great Catholic people of Spain are to be saved from annihilation."—*Sunday Paper*.

Oats and Bismarck

I OPENED the door of the dark and dingy storeroom and the old black coachman shuffled in after me out of the West Indian glare. A confused thudding behind me turned out to be onions falling from a bunch on the roof some eight feet above the floor.

"I mus' be strike me head 'gains' dem, Suh," said Shorey, retrieving them. He was about five feet high, but he carried a stick, I noticed.

"How much oats?" I asked, ignoring the onion mystery. The planter was out planting and his wife was resting with a headache. To me, then, the visitor, had fallen the task of giving out the horses' feeds. These things are written and come to pass, rough-hew them how we will.

"Well, Suh, de amounts is variable. Nelson he tek four pint but Napoleon don' tek but three-an'-a-half. Ef you give he any more he jus' blow it 'bout in de trough."

"Never mind Napoleon's table-manners," I interrupted. "How much does it come to altogether?"

"I jes' tellin' you, Suh. I jes' tellin' you. Nelson and Napoleon dey does be tek seven-an'-a-half pints. Cæsar he usted to tek four pints to himself, but sence he gettin' ole he drop back to three pints. An' he won' eat but a pinch of salt now. Things is changin' up here to be sure. Time wuz when Cæsar would eat four pints an' a handful of salt comfortable an' then pick up what Napoleon wuz blowin' 'bout de trough."

"A sound point, Shorey, without doubt. If Cæsar will eat what Napoleon blows about the trough, we must take that into consideration in our calculations. But never mind the calculations, man. Come clean with the answer to the sum: *How much oats* do you need altogether?"

"Well, Suh, to tell de truth it is all along o' Bismarck." The wizened old man scratched his woolly head. "Bismarck he does be tek—"

"Bismarck?" I said. "I thought dat Bismarck wuz—I thought that Bismarck was dead. Twenty years old he was."

"I tellin' you, Suh—I tellin' you. Bismarck he usted to eat a good five pints regular, but de mistress now say sence Bismarck dead I isn' to tek out no oats for he." He shook his hoary head sadly over the mutability of things.

"A very sound decision," I murmured.

"Yes, Suh, things is changin' up here. Cæsar he can' eat but three pints now, and sence Bismarck dead I isn' to tek out no oats for he." He wagged a dirty finger at me disapprovingly.

"Quite so, Shorey. I am not trying to persuade you to take out oats for the defunct Bismarck. Now, how much is it altogether?"

"Fifteen pints, Suh."

"But we had only got as far as ten-and-a-half."

"You is forgetting Gasoleney, Suh."

"Gasolene! You don't mean your mix gasolene with the horses' feed?"

"De new pony, Suh. Dey does be

call she some furrin name like dat. So I say dey mus' be mean Gasoleney." He tittered shrilly at this witty translation of his employer's nonsense.

"If the name is Mussolini you will be getting into trouble with the Italian Government. You might easily be an Ethiopian, Shorey. They'll set Marshal BADOGLIO at you."

"Dat is de name, Suh. An' a more disregular horse I never see. Five pints one day, an' then n' more than three de nex'."

"And which day is this, a five or a three?"

"Well, Suh, las' Friday by de moon full she get so skittish dat—"

"Damn last Friday's moon!" I cried out in my agony. "Spit out the total and be done with it, or I'll put some Obiah on you."

"Eighteen pints, praise de Lord, Suh."

"Eighteen? Even giving Mussolini five makes only fifteen-and-a-half."

"You is forgetting Wellington, Suh. Wellington usted to have four-an'-a-half pints, but sence dat day he get in de boilin'-house an' eat up so much sugar he don' seem to have no stomach for de oats. Howmsoever, I gwin try him wid four to-day an' mix a little sugar 'stead of de salt. Dat barrel in de corner, Suh."

I fetched him some sugar.

"But I isn' takin' out de oats feed now, Suh."

Keeping a firm grip of myself I sat down and lit a pipe.

"Shorey," I said, "take me into your confidence in this matter. What exactly are you taking out? Never mind about Napoleon's hiccups; cut out your reminiscences of the lamented Bismarck; forget all about last Friday's moon; and do not explain what this our Cæsar feeds upon that he is grown so great. Just tell me what it is you want from this room."

Shorey was subdued. "Bran for de bran-mash, Suh. In dat barrel you is settin' upon."

I got up and waved him to the barrel without daring to inquire about the amounts.

Shorey filled his buckets happily.

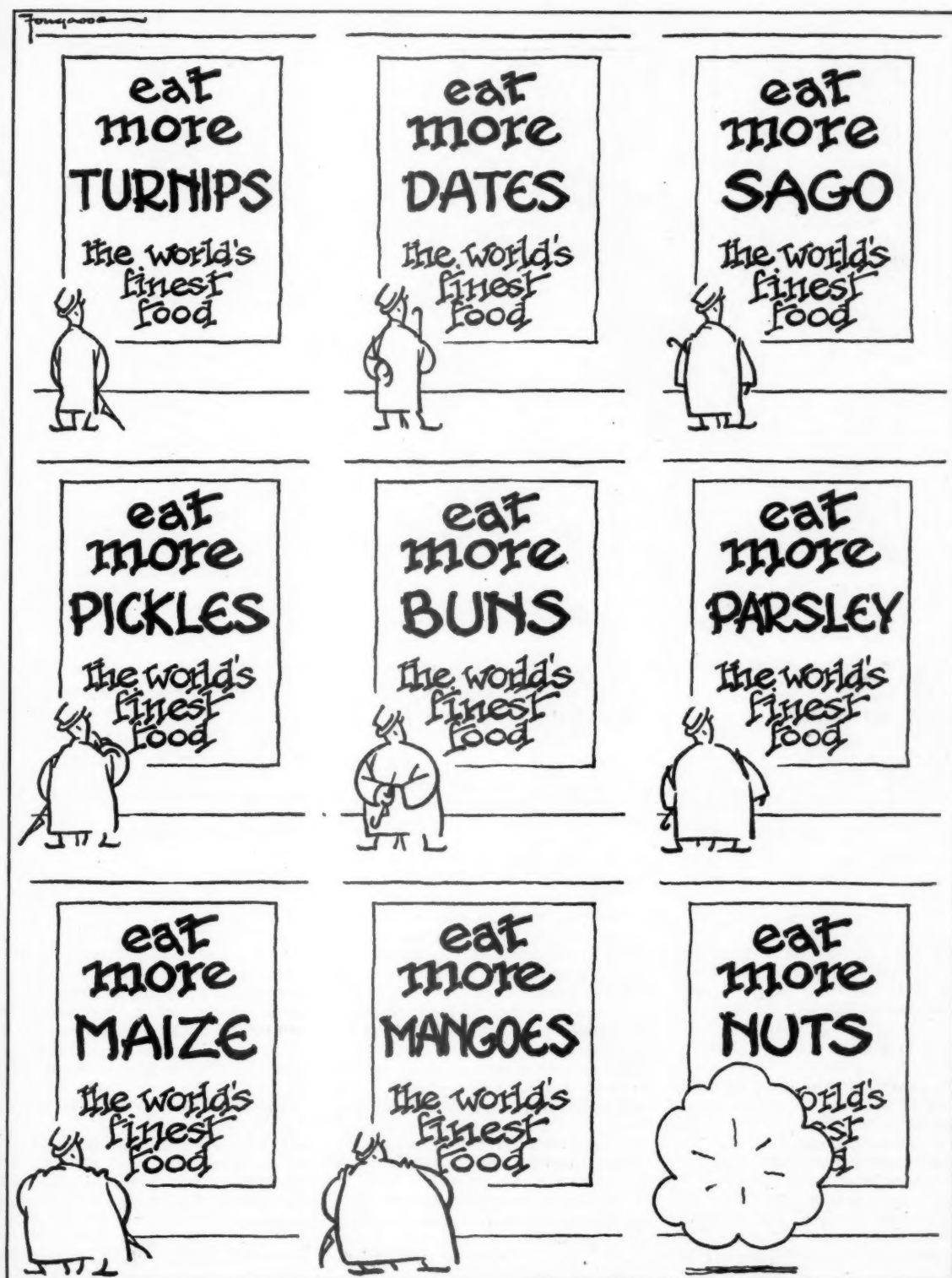
"Bismarck usted to fancy a little rice sometimes, Suh. Mebbe Wellington would pick a little if you wuz to—"

"No," I said firmly. "The mistress said nothing about rice. Try him with an onion."

The old man gazed at me reproachfully. And he ducked elaborately as he passed below the bunch of onions a yard above his head.



"ARE YOU COMING DOWN, OR DO YOU WANT ME TO COME UP AND FETCH YOU?"





SARTORIAL STICKLER

Cold Comfort

I REMEMBER of old
If I caught the least cold
Dad, Mother and Nannie were fussed
as could be;
I was packed off to bed
And delectably fed
On chicken and custard and black-
currant tea.
With a lovely hot bottle,
Warm wool round my throttle
And grapes at my bedside, 'twas rather
a spree;
I was sure that the whole world
revolved around me.

But Nannie has left me
And Time has bereft me
Of all those dear fussers—I'm fifty,
you see;
My landlady's worse
Than no use as a nurse,
And on invalid diet we never agree.
When you're lonely and old
There's small fun in a cold,
And it takes stronger potions than
black-currant tea
To ensure that the whole world revolves
around me.

Seasonable Problem No. 1

"I THINK, dear, that I ought to do
my Christmas cards this evening."
"Mother! You don't mean to say
you haven't done your cards yet!"
"It isn't so very late, dear. Not if
we get them all done to-night. Only
December 23rd."

"Well, have you got a list?"

"I have, dear, and yet in a way I
haven't—if you see what I mean. The
fact is, I made *too many* lists. There
was the presents list, and the groceries,
and the foreign mails, and the calen-
dars, and amongst them all the cards
got mislaid. But I think I can remem-
ber most of the names, especially if
you'll *promise* to remind me about the
Browns. I know I've forgotten them
year after year, and they *always* re-
member me in the most tiresome way."

"Then let's do the Browns first.
What kind of a card? What about
this one, with the kittens?"

"No, dear. Somehow kittens don't
look like the Browns. Wasn't there a
coach-and-four somewhere?"

"Oh, do the Browns look like a
coach-and-four? Here it is—

*'My wishes come this Christmas-tide
To greet you though the seas divide.'*

Perhaps it's rather excessive, as they
only live across the road."

"Then, dear, give them the mouse
carrying the candle upstairs. It's nice
and old-fashioned and will remind
them of their younger days. What does
it say?"

"It says—

*'Just a wee doch and doris
Before we gang awa'.'*"

"Very well, that will do nicely. I've
often wondered what those lines
meant, but I daresay the Browns will
know. And now I want something for
Aunt Phyllis. A *really* nice one."

"I like that black-and-white one,
Mother. It looks like a kind of wood-
cut."

"It won't do at all. Aunt Phyllis
isn't in the least artistic."

"In that case give her this one, with
the bells and the piece of holly and
the robin and the bunch of violets and
the grandfather clock and the plum-
pudding."

"What does it say?"

"'With sincere regards to you and
yours from me and mine.'"

"Dear me! that's much more like the Browns. Could we change over?"

"Then Aunt Phyllis gets the mouse, and the wee doch and doris. Is that all right?"

"I'm not quite sure. Perhaps something a little more . . . No, dear, not a hunting one on any account. Aunt Phyllis is anti-blood-sport. Perhaps we shall come across something to suit her later on. Now how would *this* do for poor Mrs. Green?"

"Blue birds and a little date-card. 'To wish you a long life and a jolly one from—' Would that do?"

"The only thing is, dear, she's just going to be ninety, and quite bed-ridden. I think we might do better than that."

"Yes, I should think we easily might. Do you like: 'The old, old wish,' or is that rather pointed?"

"I meant 'The old, old wish' for Cousin Arthur, because it's got a picture of a sleigh, and when he was quite a young man he once went to America."

"I see."

"The bulldogs *might* do for Mr. Pink. I know his sister has a Pekinese—though I believe it died. Perhaps they'd rather not be reminded."

"Would they like a ship in full sail?"

"If you can find an envelope that can take it, I daresay they would. We really are getting on. Now the Rectory—and be *very* particular. Nothing comic."

"*This* doesn't look to me at all comic. Forget-me-nots in a purple bowl, and it says—

'Old wine, old books, old times, I wot,
And eke old friends, and so Forget-me-not!'

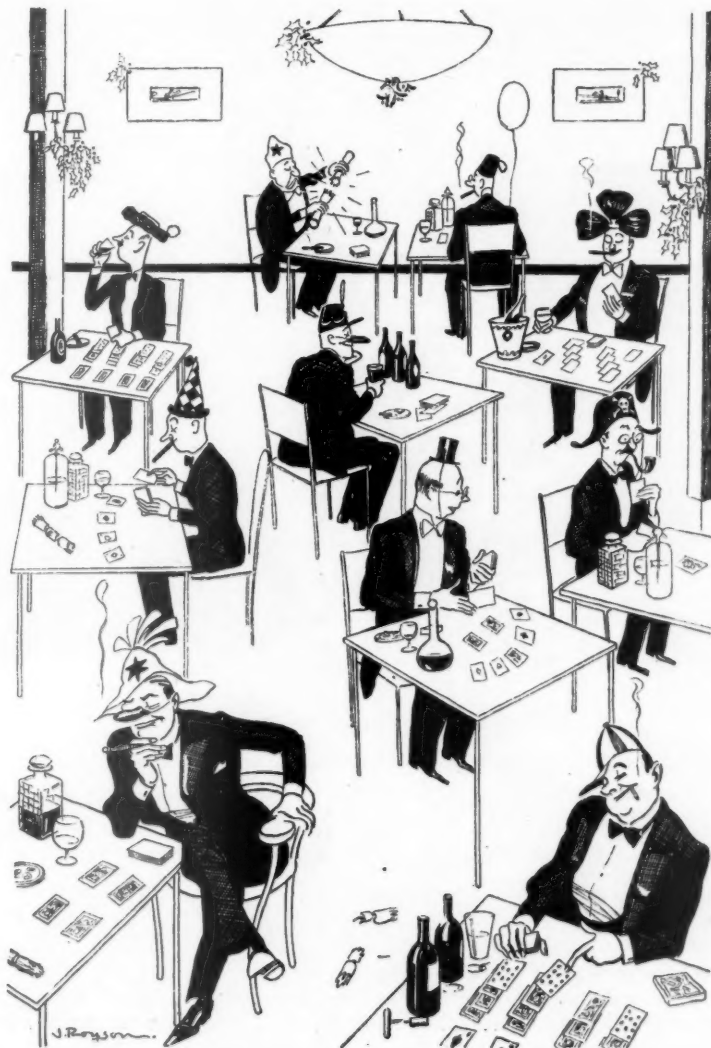
"Well, of course they've only been at the Rectory six months, and I don't know them very well. I think they'd better have Highland cattle, if the words are all right."

"The words are just 'Yuletide cheer be yours.' I wonder why they put that with the Highland cattle—or do you suppose it has something to do with roast beef?"

"Certainly not, dear. What an extraordinary idea! It's always turkey at Christmas. Now the Whites. Are they to have For Auld Lang Syne, or Ye Wassail Bowl, or The Moon over Tintern Abbey?"

"Don't you think perhaps *not* Auld Lang Syne? It was the Whites, wasn't it, that you weren't on speaking terms with for nearly five years?"

"So it was. They behaved disgracefully over that business of the bound-



CHRISTMAS REVELRY AT THE PATIENCE CLUB

ary. Still, we've made it up now. They'd better have Ye Wassail Bowl, if the words are suitable."

"'With loving thoughts and true' are the words."

"Then what does Tintern Abbey say?"

"Tintern Abbey just says 'Seasonable Greetings.'"

"Ah, that's much more like the Whites. But I want Tintern Abbey for Lady Black, because she used to paint in water-colours years ago."

"Would you mind sending loving thoughts and true to Lady Black?"

"Well, no—not really."

"Then let's change over the inside

leaves of Tintern Abbey and Ye Wassail Bowl. Then the Whites just get seasonable greetings and Lady Black has loving thoughts and true."

"Dear, that's *excellent*! And I've still got For Auld Lang Syne in reserve, in case I find I've forgotten someone after all. Last year, I remember, I entirely overlooked the Canon and I had to send him quite a *good* calendar at the New Year instead."

"Well, Mother, I should be a little bit careful of For Auld Lang Syne, if I were you. It has 'With fondest greetings and every loving wish' and a piece of mistletoe gummed inside it."

E. M. D.



"HE HELPED HIMSELF TO JAM WHEN YOU WASN'T LOOKING."

A Pleasant Bit of Reading

LET'S have a look at that there paper, Mrs. Jenkins,
For I likes a bit of reading now and then;
It helevates the mind and it's reelly more refined
Than the passing of remarks about the men;
So keep an eye on them there rissoles, Mrs. Jenkins,
And see that piece of steak don't overdo,
While I eases off my shoes and 'as a look-see at the news,
For I likes to see what's 'app'ning, dear—don't *you*?

EARTHQUAKE IN JAPAN and MASSACRE IN SPAIN.

Well, I never!

COUNTESS ROBBED AT CANNES and TORSO FOUND IN
TRAIN.

Did you ever!

RAJAH MARRIES TYPIST—SEARCH FOR MISSING GIRL.
BALDWIN'S VIEWS ON GARBO—LIBEL ON AN EARL.

Oh—dear—me!

SEVEN STRUCK BY LIGHTNING—LION ESCAPES FROM
ZOO;

BISHOP SWIMS THE CHANNEL and a NUDIST SEEN AT
KEW . . .

Upon my word, it's reelly very awful, Mrs. Jenkins,
And I'm sure it must be terribly unlawful, Mrs.
Jenkins,

So let's have a nice cup of tea.

The world seems kind of topsy-turvy, Mrs. Jenkins,
And right is very similar to wrong,
And I must admit I feels, as a lady with ideels,
That it can't go on like this for very long.
But if everyone was always good and proper, Mrs. Jenkins,
And there was no more betting, cards and drink,
Just imagine what we'd miss on an afternoon like this—
So I'll have another look at it, I think.

MUSSOLINI'S THREAT and FASCIST WAR ON REDS.

Well, I never!

HEIRESS MURDERS VET and WOMAN-HATER WEDS.

Did you ever!

MULTI-MILLIONAIRE SPENDS HONEYMOON ON BARGE—
THUNDERBOLT IN KENT and MADMAN STILL AT LARGE.

Oh—dear—me!

STORM BREAKS OUT IN COMMONS—BRIGHTON COOK
HAS QUINS.

NEW YORK GANGSTER WRITES ABOUT HIS WOMEN
AND HIS SINS . . .

I don't know where these goings-on are leading, Mrs.
Jenkins,

But they make a very pleasant bit of reading, Mrs.
Jenkins,

So let's have another cup of tea.



ENGLAND CARRIES ON

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Impressions of Parliament

Synopsis of the Week

Monday, December 14th.—Lords: Address to the King moved.

Commons: Address to the King moved.



The Waiter (Col. COLVILLE). "I THINK THIS ENTRÉE OUGHT TO DO TO GO ON WITH—THAT IS UNTIL THE PIÈCE DE RÉSISTANCE CAN BE SERVED."

[The Livestock Industry Bill will be introduced immediately after Parliament re-assembles on January 19.]

Tuesday, December 15th.—Lords: Public Order Bill taken in Committee.

Commons: Consideration of Beef and Veal Policy.

Wednesday, December 16th.—Lords: Debate on National Wealth.

Commons: Debates on Pithead Baths and Distress in the Highlands.

Monday, December 14th.—Both Houses divided the day between the swearing-in of Members and the moving of Addresses in reply to the Message brought to them from the new KING.

The Lords' Address was moved by Lord HALIFAX, who saw a good augury in the fact that, like his father, KING GEORGE VI. succeeded to the throne as a second son, had seen his first service as a sailor, and was privileged to enjoy the background of a perfect home-life. Lord SNELL explained that, although his Party were not formally committed to the monarchic system, their greatest aims were peace and the preservation of individual freedom, and since these three seemed bound up at the present time, that was sufficient reason why he and his friends should promise HIS MAJESTY their co-opera-

tion. Behind the Throne, he said, stood a strong and united people; and he ended with the hope that the KING would never sever his contacts with the workers in mill and mine and shop.

Lord CREWE gave the Liberal Peers' wholehearted support to the motion, and paid a special tribute to the affection which QUEEN ELIZABETH had already won as Duchess of York.

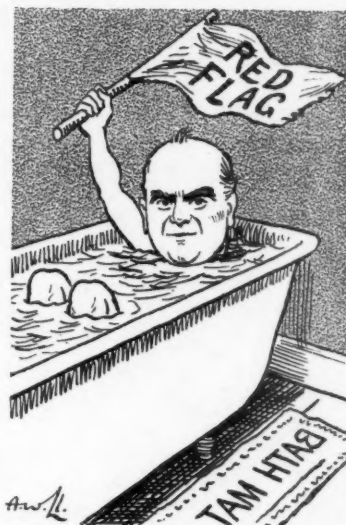
In the Commons the Address was moved by Mr. BALDWIN, who assured the House that they had listened to no mere formal phrase when the KING, in his Message, had referred to his "great personal distress"; and went on to speak of his profound conviction that the KING, so like his father, would allow no personal predilections of any kind to stand between him and his duty as King and Emperor.

Mr. ATTLEE, who shared the day's cheers with the P.M., told the House what confidence his Party found in the KING's deep practical interest in the welfare of working boys; and Sir ARCHIBALD SINCLAIR, after expressing his gratitude to the former KING and to QUEEN MARY for their bearing in days of such extreme difficulty, recalled with pride how KING GEORGE VI. was a veteran of the Battle of Jutland.

Tuesday, December 15th.—The KING's thanks for yesterday's loyal Addresses were carried to the Lords by Lord CROMER and to the Commons by Sir GEORGE PENNY.

When the Lords began work again with the Public Order Bill, Lord STRABOLGI moved to omit the proviso

that the wearing of political uniforms might be sanctioned by the police for special occasions, and reminded the House how often funerals abroad proved an ample excuse for disorder; but Lord DUFFERIN denied that this gap in the Bill was as large as Lord STRABOLGI made out.

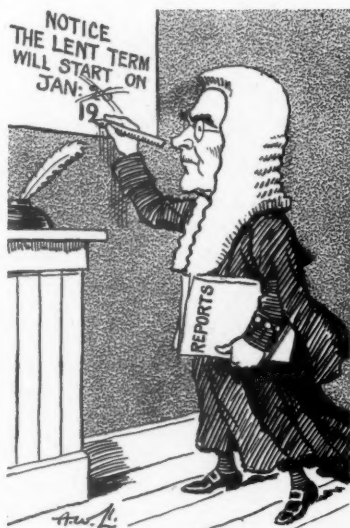


SIR WILLIAM GALLACHER, K.C.B.

[Despite the postponement of the usual New Year Honours Mr. Punch has been pleased to confer the Most Honourable Order of the Bath (Pithead) on the Member for Fife, W.]

The passage which provided for the banning of processions on the initiative of the police appeared to Lord PHILLIMORE to ignore the value of a well-proved public safety-valve. What troubles might not have ensued, he asked, if the Chartists had not wisely been allowed to walk about the country and fetch up at a good country-house about supper-time? But his amendment was also withdrawn.

The Bishop of WINCHESTER's expression of disappointment at the Government's failure to bring in earlier a Bill to amend the existing Special Areas Act brought another edition of the more or less standard Government reply on this subject from Lord HUTCHISON, and a number of indignant speeches. Lord SALISBURY hotly condemned the jealousies within the steel industry which had wrecked the Jarrow scheme, and pointed out that, since the £7,000,000 spent annually in the Special Areas in relief represented a capital sum of £200,000,000, it was absurd to shrink from generous expenditure which would substitute prosperity for misery. The PRIMATE confessed that he was growing a little



The Speaker. "AND NOW, BOYS, BEFORE WE BREAK UP FOR CHRISTMAS I HAVE TO MAKE A LITTLE ALTERATION IN THE TIME-TABLE." (*Murmurs from the class.*)



THE DICTATOR OF BOSHONIA ENDEARS HIMSELF TO THE HEARTS OF HIS PEOPLE.

tired of the Government's virtuous answers, and reminded them that the only possible solution was the encouragement of new works.

The old Dutch masters were moderate men. VAN TROMP was content with a single broom at his mast-head. But the Dutch masters of to-day are involved in numerous brushes, it seems, with the Thames pilots, to whom the breadth and incivility of their observations have become irking, even though a revelation. Lord APSLEY raised the question of their manners in the Commons this afternoon, and Mr. RUNCIMAN, a mildly-spoken man himself, promised to use his influence to clear the air of the lower Thames.

Sir PHILIP SASSOON's reluctance to guarantee answers in due course to a number of searching questions put to him by Captain HAROLD BALFOUR on the six accidents which occurred to a single squadron of the R.A.F. last Saturday led Captain BALFOUR, who appeared to be well supported, to give notice that he would raise the matter on the Adjournment.

A happy evening was then spent in the contemplation of beef. Colonel COLVILLE acted as the official waiter, and the Opposition wielded their pepper-pot without startling effect.

Wednesday, December 16th.—Very few are aware that the wealth of the

nation, like a bottle of spirits left out in the sun, is evaporating all the time and would ultimately disappear if the country's savings were not enough to make good the loss. Lord MONKSWELL, who brought up the question in the Lords, put the annual depreciation

at 2%, so that, calculating the total wealth at between thirty and forty billion, seven hundred million, he considered, would need to be put by every year to keep the figure constant.

Lord MOTTISTONE, however, thought this a gloomy view, and comforted the House with the information that the savings of small investors was increasing; and for the Government Lord TEMPLEMORE, who preferred to accept Sir JOSIAH STAMP's estimate of the national capital, which was only eighteen billion, said he was satisfied that at present savings were sufficient to meet the loss by wear and tear.

In the Commons Mr. GALLACHER, our tame Communist, asked that an inquiry should be instituted into what means could be taken to accelerate the erection of pithead baths for miners, and Captain CROOKSHANK apparently satisfied him by declaring his willingness to consult the Miners' Welfare Committee on the subject. Afterwards Mr. GIBSON called attention to the distressed condition of the Highlands and islands of Scotland, over a third of which, he said, roamed the deer, protected by law but a menace to the crops of the crofter; and stated his view that the lack of fish which was imperilling the fishing industry was due to trawlers raking up the spawning grounds in the shallow waters.



OUR BACK-BENCH WHO'S WHO

Parliamentarily speaking, Mr. MALCOLM MACMILLAN

Is still an
Infant-in-arms;
But the Western Isles have succumbed
to his charms.

Double o' Mine

THERE walks a man, I've learned of late,
Endowed with feature, form and gait
So like my own—strange though the fact may be—
That friends have dealt a gladsome smack
Upon his unresponsive back
And found it wasn't me.

And there are persons too who greet
Me in the wide and open street
With outstretched hand and joyous grin until
The sparkle withers in their eyes
And, much dismayed, they realise
That I am not their Bill.

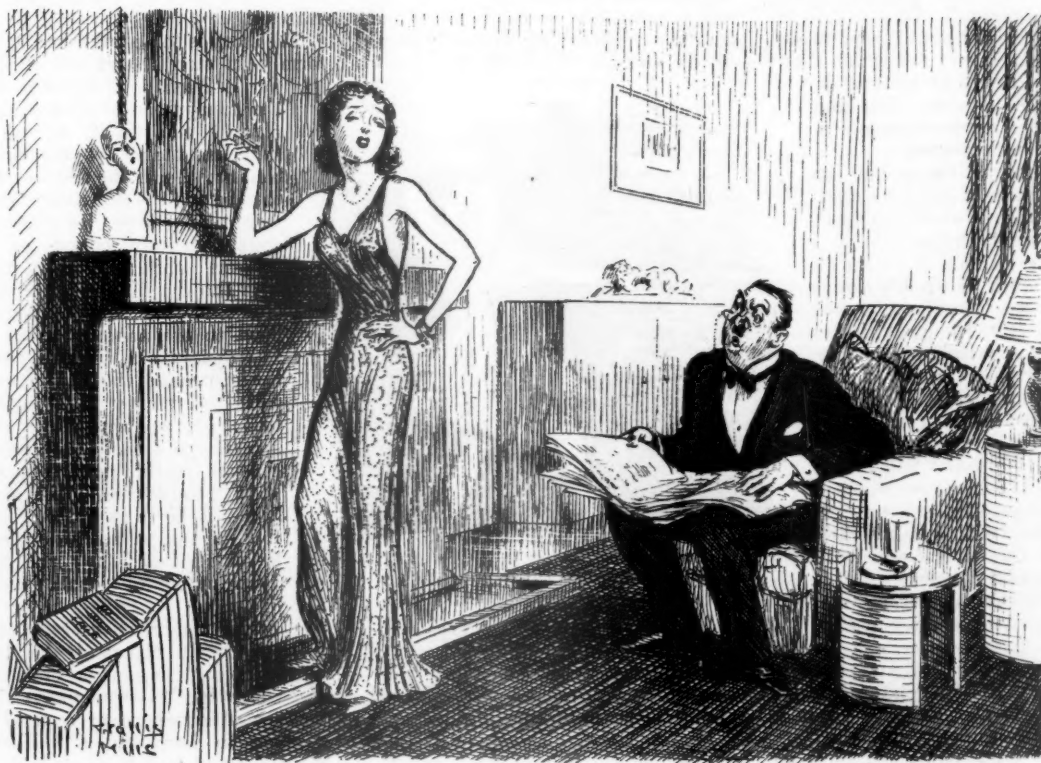
Double of mine, some Higher Grace
Has made us one in form and face;
This the great world may bear as best it can;
It's not for us to carp and chide,
But how do you get on inside?
Are you a moral man?

Mine is a fair and worthy name,
A sturdy growth, but all the same
Not to be trifled with, and hardly won,
And I object to conduct which
Might queer, as people say, my pitch,
While you've had all the fun.

Wherefore go slow; if err you must,
You'll kindly keep it dark, I trust;
Let not your naughtiness be seen of men;
Hardened as you may be, no doubt,
The wrong idea might get about,
And where should I be then?

There is the other side, perhaps;
If I myself, from some small lapse,
Land in the soup, as e'en the best may do,
You'll come in handy, as a fact,
And I shall hope with simple tact
To shove it off on you.

DUM-DUM.



Husband. "TO-DAY IS THE SHORTEST DAY OF THE YEAR, MY DEAR."
Wife. "THINK SO?"

At the Play

"THE BOY DAVID" (HIS MAJESTY'S)

A SOPHISTICATED first-night audience at His Majesty's found themselves taken back to their childhood and shown an early Bible picture-book brought to life. The scenes, designed by Mr. AUGUSTUS JOHN, with their rich colour and depth, were clapped for their merits, apart altogether from the play. In this setting there appear Old Testament figures all straight from the pages of a picture-book. All save one. It gives them all a familiar air, and familiar too are the things they talk about, like GOLIATH and the Philistines.

The prophet *Samuel* (Sir JOHN MARTIN-HARVEY) starts the real action of the play. He is full of gentle decision, as mild a prophet as ever hewed a king in pieces, and just what one would expect the infant *Samuel* of the well-known picture to turn slowly into with time.

Saul (Mr. GODFREY TEARLE) is a man of immense vigour and passion, and the action, which is a little slow at the first, gathers full momentum in the Second Act, where *Saul* is a protagonist. It is this Second Act which shows Sir JAMES BARRIE at his best in the dialogue between *Saul* and *David*, where an increasing dramatic tension is created.

Mr. GODFREY TEARLE has the great advantage of playing a credible part. This is what we expect an Old Testament figure to be, and he shows us a man of whom all manner of dark and noble things are equally easy to accept. *Ophir*, his general (Mr. LEON QUARTERMAINE), and *Jonathan*, his son (Mr. BOBBY RIETTI), enhance the naturalness and make this Bible play seem history; but it is not as exciting history that it is offered to us. If the dramatist had meant that, he could easily have widened his plot and increased his tension. As it is, the Third Act has little relation to the Second and leads to no particular conclusion. It is episodic, showing in dreams moments in the later history of *Saul* and *David*.

There is only one hint, and that in the First Act, of the later *David* of history. It is *David's* early boyhood that both the dramatist and Miss ELISABETH BERGNER set out to show us. The pictorial realism of the rest of the cast throws into relief the remote and strange nature of this *David*. He belongs

to the rest of the BARRIE plays as no other character does; and it is a weakness, a measure of the difficulties Sir JAMES BARRIE has set himself, that Miss BERGNER's gifts are not those which can suggest any native strength



BAD NEWS FOR THE KING

Saul Mr. GODFREY TEARLE
Ophir Mr. LEON QUARTERMAINE
Nathan Mr. ION SWINLEY

of will or natural parts in the young shepherd boy. *David* is not in the same key as *Saul*, and so the bond of their common origin as shepherds is swamped by the strange friendship of opposites



SMITING OF A PHILISTINE

David Miss ELISABETH BERGNER

as this BARRIE child goes confidently about the stage making friends.

Miss BERGNER's *David* is utterly dependent on the help of the Lord. It is so incredible that he could kill lions and bears with his hands that he easily disbelieves it himself. And his slaying of

Goliath has all the character of a miracle which did not even require *David* to be skilful with the sling. But Miss BERGNER gets everything out of the part that it contains. Her art makes us feel the full loneliness of being the eighth child and excluded from equal fellowship by the older and harder sons of *Jesse*. Like the dramatist, she is at her happiest in moments of childish pathos, eating *Jesse's* supper or fearing *Jesse's* belt. But within the small range of *David's* early home life and his great adventure she brings to life someone not indeed from the Old Testament, but the product of a fine sensitive fancy, using old and cherished material. Great and varied talents have been assembled, and, all pulling together, they achieve a remarkable *tour de force*. D. W.

"BUSMAN'S HONEYMOON" (COMEDY)

The first night of this play was notable since it marked Miss DOROTHY SAYERS' first essay as a dramatist, in which she was partnered by M. ST. CLARE BYRNE, and the first three-dimensional appearance of her celebrated hero, *Lord Peter Wimsey*.

The story is to be published in novel form next month, and is a sequel to *Gaudy Night* in that its period is the honeymoon of *Lord Peter* and *Harriet*, who finally agreed with some reluctance at the close of that novel, as many will remember, to abandon the pretence that they were not in love. It follows the usual leisurely course of Miss SAYERS' work, and in no part of it is the careful establishment of character and background sacrificed to the temptation of easy superficial thrill. There is nothing here to make the hair stand on end; but plenty to agitate the brain; just as Miss SAYERS' novels have shape without their criminal content, so this play, even if the body of the detestable *Mr. Noakes* had not been laid down in the cellar, would stand as a comedy of love harassed by the appalling and constant commotions of country life.

The minor characters are all excellently observed and taken, the construction is creak-proof and the weight of suspicion is ingeniously shifted whenever a solid case appears to be forming. *Wimsey's* method, moreover, is scrupulously fair and conducted so far as is possible in the open.

Of its kind the play is unquestionably

good; it seems to me that its claim to further praise must depend on the individual reaction to *Wimsey's* personality, and I must confess that this has pleased me least in Miss SAYERS' writing, for he has generally struck me as too self-conscious in his perfection, and I find his trick of whisking the apt tag out of a bottomless memory unbearably irritating. Here, admittedly, a certain comedy is gained for the quotation-game by the introduction of a *Superintendent* whose knowledge of English literature far exceeds his working acquaintance of the English tongue; but when *Wimsey* holds forth to *Harriet* on the sacredness of his mission to stymie local Crippens I am afraid I put him down a prig. But many, I know, will not agree with me, and anyway *Wimsey* can be forgiven much for his efficiency when once on the job.

I have said almost enough of the plot. A furnished cottage in the depths of the country having been rented for the honeymoon, its owner is discovered to be not only dead but to have been a blackmailer and in debt. The cottage fills rapidly with villagers, police and duns—and *Lord Peter* and his bride stay on nobly to find the villain. Which of course they do. A commendable paragraph in the pro-

gramme indicates in which scenes the clues as regards Means, Motive and Opportunity are to be found. The



LOVE AMONG THE DUNS

Lord Peter Wimsey MR. DENNIS ARUNDELL
Harriet MISS VERONICA TURLEIGH

authors have certainly played very fair.

MR. DENNIS ARUNDELL's *Wimsey* was less detached than I had imagined him,

but is a polished piece of acting which fits convincingly into Miss SAYERS' atmosphere; I liked Miss VERONICA TURLEIGH's *Harriet* very much—these two combined well; *Bunter*, the valet, was beautifully safe in the hands of Mr. NORMAN NORMAN, whose agony over the criminally mishandled Cockburn '96 was a lovely spectacle; Mr. ROGER MAXWELL's *Mr. Puffett*, the sweep who removed pull-overs in proportion to the difficulties presented by a chimney, was a splendid comic character; Miss CHRISTINE SILVER brought in a touch of tragedy, most sympathetically conveyed, with *Miss Twitterton*; Mr. DAVID HAWTHORNE's erudite *Superintendent* was in the best traditions; the disgruntled gardener of Mr. BARRIE LIVESEY was well done; and Potted Char, that unflinching theatrical delicacy, was contributed in the first quality by Miss NELLIE BOWMAN, who has a laugh like an aggravated capercaillie.

Before a healthy run sets in, as is likely, the dress needs revision. Mr. LIVESEY's walking-out suit is much too well cut; *Miss Twitterton's* funeral array is also too good; and would anyone in *Wimsey's* position, on a rural honeymoon, attend a one-horse burial in black overcoat and top-hat?

ERIC.

Oak Song

My growth is slow
Up and below;
My roots hold fast,
I shall last, I shall last
As long as the wild winds know
They can fling my acorns low.

HAROLD has fallen on Senlac field,
Food for my fibres the corpses yield;
RUFUS lies by the Forest Stone,
Watch me grow while the kings pass on.
Green-cupped acorns I'm shedding at last
And the hogs are routing amidst my mast,
Ships for the sailors, rib and keel,
Midst ocean surges my grandsires reel,
Taller and taller and tougher I grow,
Watching the pulsing world below,
Lovers that woo beneath my shade,
Masterful man and timorous maid;
Birth at morning and Death at night,
Sorrow at sunrise, with sunset delight;
Men who were old when I was young,
The night wind sings where their children sung.

On Ditchling Beacon a flaring light
Tells the world of the oak-wood's might;
The crimson glare on Plymouth Hoe
Flings sparks on high for Spain to know
That the chestnut galleons towering tall
Must flee from the oak-tree, king of all.

Through my leafless branches the same cold star
Shines as it shone at Trafalgar,
When the coaches clattered from London Town
To halloo the oak tree's sea-renown.

A wild boar trampled me underfoot
As he crunched the succulent parsley root,
And stamped me into the pulpy ground—
One acorn the staggart never found.
There I lay in my winter's bed
Till the birth-pangs wakened me midst the dead,
And I fed on the slush and mire around
Until my spear-head broke the ground.
See me a weakling lank and frail,
Too lean to be mark for the arrow hail,
Too lean to be sport for the roystering gale.
I bowed my tight-clipt paltry head
To the sullen burden of Saxon dead
Groping anon through the rich decay,
Where the outlaw's life-blood had drained away,
Tribute to me he was forced to pay.

Round me the bracken snaked and curled,
Higher and higher the fronds unfurled,
Lording it over the baby tree,
Biding his time uncaringly.

Up and below
My growth was slow.
I shall last, I shall last
While my roots hold fast
And I fling my acorns low.

The Water Afrit

THE Beduin Arab is not a cultivator by choice. But necessity is a hard task-master, and when it is a question of virtual starvation or taking advantage of the flowing water that a benign Government has dammed and brought to his land, he will regretfully shoulder his mattock or borrow one from someone else, and go and do his best.

The stream that the *Hakooma* had just dammed had for the last thousand years or more been allowed to drain to waste down the wide valley, and now, with channels filled with water flowing through soil enriched with silt, even the haphazard Beduin could not fail to make a success of things. Maize and millet yielded bumper crops, whilst the fruit-trees, provided by officials with Covent Garden mentalities, provided an amazing amount of that type of high-class fruit one expects at banquets or orders for film-stars on those rare occasions when they consent to come to lunch, but which hardly arrive within the ken of desert nomads.

Sobeih, a particularly small and insignificant member of the Teaha tribe, who had existed for forty years on dates, goats' milk and, on rare and special occasions, barley-meal, was heard arguing the respective merits of the Victoria plum, Hale's Early peach and the Lord Napier nectarine.

"By the Prophet, this *barquq* is sweeter than the honey-date, but its stone is large, and that is waste; the *khokh* is sweet also and has much juice, but its skin is tough and bitter. *Wallahi* for me, who understands these things, I choose the nectarine."

"La, la, Sobeih," said Mesallem. "The nectarine is the illicit offspring of the peach and plum, and no good Muslim should eat it, for it is *mush haram* (not lawful)."

When all the land had been taken up there still remained about three acres at the head of the valley, but here, alas! the water did not flow to the surface of the soil. To the hardy *fellah*

of the Nile Valley a little matter like this presents no difficulty, for he will blindfold his camel and walk him round a water-wheel, or he will lift it himself by means of the *shaduf*, a pole with a bucket attached slung between two posts. Neither of these systems was of the slightest use to the Beduin, for his camel flatly refused to be blindfolded or to walk round a wheel, and as for himself toiling all day on a *shaduf*, the idea was both unthinkable and degrading. The kindly Government resolved that all the land should be cultivated, therefore installed a ram, which is one of those simple little machines that no one understands but which by employing a flow of water forces about one-eighth of the supply up a pipe to any given height.



"FELLER 'ERE WANTS AN AUDITION, CHIEF."

The Beduin were brought to see the ram put into position, and when it proceeded to send out a jet of water with the steady tick-tock—tick-tock of its internal mechanism there were fervent and deep-throated "Allahs!" apparently of appreciation. It was disappointing, therefore, some three weeks later to discover the soil still unworked and unploughed; and the ram, annoyed at finding its water unused, creating a first-class mosquito-breeding haunt. Inquiries were made, and amid a maze of Arab mendacity about lack of ploughs, shortage of camels, broken mattocks, etc., the truth gradually leaked out. The ram was an infernal contrivance and *mush haram*. Engines that consumed petrol or paraffin were understood, if regretted, but a machine that pumped water with no motive power must of necessity be operated by an *afrit*

directed by *Shaitan*. The night of its installation a stray Beduin drover, having heard the ram ticking over with methodical beats, had investigated it at close quarters and had then run yelling through the encampment calling all to witness that a devil was in occupation of the valley. To employ the water supplied by Satan would be tantamount to reserving a place in the hottest part of the Hereafter, and so the ram continued to work with the water running to waste, till one day, tiring of its useless endeavour, it clogged with scum and stopped.

A mechanic was sent down from Headquarters to take it to pieces, and during his visit he initiated into its mysteries Sobeih, who, besides being an expert on, dessert fruit, was generally of an inquiring turn of mind. When the valley was visited about a month later it was found that the whole of the three acres had been ploughed and that there was already a thin green film of sprouting corn on the surface of the soil. Sobeih, smiling the smile of a man who has climbed rapidly up the social ladder, was in charge, and on being asked how the *afrit* was working, he dived into a scrub-bush and emerged with a huge rusty spanner.

"That story of the *afrit* is but for the ignorant Arabs to believe," he said scornfully. "*Ana mekaniiki* (I am an engineer)," and he held up the spanner proudly. "I take the ram to pieces every week and clean it. No, there is no *afrit* inside, but there is a very clever idea which I understand. And I bought the land very cheap from its owner before he knew that there was no *afrit*."

"CHRISTMAS DRINKS MUDDLE."
Newspaper Headline.

Yes, but only if indulged in to excess.

"Sir,—Some days ago we were stranded a few miles from Mooi River with a burst oil pump. The owner of ND818 stopped and gave us a push into Mooi River. Many thanks."—*Letter to a Natal Paper*.

Not at all. Glad you enjoyed the dip.



"ALLOW ME, MADAM. MAY I CARRY YOUR HEAD FOR YOU?"

Painting the Lily

["In another poem 'communist orator' has been altered to 'political orator.'"—*The Times Literary Supplement* on W. H. AUDEN's anthology of his own poetry.]

THE Mantuan would compose, historians say,
A dozen verses at the break of day,
And all the long hours through each lovely line
He'd weigh and ponder, polish and refine;
Then, when they shone like gold in furnace tried,
At eve he'd set them down, scarce satisfied.
Nor have the bards of Albion's tuneful isle
Disdained the toilsome labour of the file,
Cutting afresh their jewels five words long
And making still more musical their song.
POPE, KEATS and TUPPER, TENNYSON and PYE
All knew the chamois-leather to apply;
WORDSWORTH could sacrifice—his eyes were dim
No doubt with unshed tears—"dear brother Jim;"*
While "FITZ" reshaped again and yet again

The Persian sage's melancholy strain.
And even in this age of careless haste,
When bards nor business men have time to waste
On verbal graces, there are found a few
Who still the evanescent shade pursue
Of perfect beauty, tireless in the chase,
As may be seen in Mr. AUDEN's case.
Intent on loading every rift with ore,
He wrought the phrase, "communist orator."
Could allocution more of magic hold?
Yet, ill content, he now transmutes its gold
To rarer stuff—thrice-subtle alchemist!—
Writing "political" for "communist."

* "A simple child, dear brother Jim," original first line of "We Are Seven."

"Great blowing by G. O. Allen and Voce on a rain-affected wicket routed Australia."—*Provincial Paper*.
But was it cricket?

The Widow Woman's Heirlooms

ONCE upon a time a poor widow lived in that cottage which stands on the edge of Blackstain Moor overlooking Bilbury. She kept hens and used to give teas to motorists; and she scraped and saved every penny she could so that her son Jack could go to college in Bilbury. But when winter came the hens stopped laying and motorists no longer went out on to the moors for tea, so she was hard put to it to raise even the rent. And many a time her landlord, who was a hard man, threatened her and told her that he was only waiting for the cold weather so as to be able to turn her out into the snow.

Well, one Friday evening things looked very black indeed for Mrs. Twankey (for such was her name). None of the hens had laid at all that week, and she had no money put by for the rent. What was worse, snow lay deep on the moors all waiting for someone to be turned out into it. So Mrs. Twankey's heart was heavy indeed as she put the kettle on the hob and sat down to wait for her son Jack, who would be bicycling home from his college in Bilbury.

But just then she heard a knock at the door, and when she opened it she found that a short stout gentleman in a plus-four suit had arrived in a big car and was standing outside. Now, if you ask me, the stout gentleman must have been the Fairy Queen in disguise (because, you see, I know what the end of the story is going to be), but all he said was, "Got a bit of summat for tea, Missus?"

So she said, "Come in, Sir. I can give you some lovely new-laid eggs and some home-made bread fresh from the oven." And then she set about getting some eggs out of pickle and cutting slices off the loaf which the Bilbury Co-operative had left the week before.

Well, while he was waiting the stout gentleman went prowling about the parlour looking at the photograph of Mr. Twankey in his Masonic regalia, fiddling about with the music on top of the piano and examining the furniture. And after a bit he came to a stop before a big oak dresser and began to peer at it in a particularly knowing manner.

"Ah, quite a nice little piece, this is, Missus," he said at length. "How did you come by it?"

Well, now, the dresser had been a wedding-present to Mr. Twankey from his brother, who was in the sham-antique furniture trade and had made it himself out of odds and ends that he had picked up cheap. So Mrs. Twankey said, "Oh, that! Why, it's too old to be worth anything now. It's been in the family for three hundred years to my knowledge."

"Has it indeed?" said the stout gentleman. "Well, I'll tell you what I'll do: I'll give you twenty pounds cash for it. Seems to me it would go very nice in the baronial hall what I'm having built."

"Oh, Sir," cried Mrs. Twankey, "I'm sure it's not worth all that money. And besides I couldn't bear to part with it—not when it's been in the family for four hundred years."

"All right then," said the stout gentleman, "I'll give you thirty pounds."

"Don't tempt me, Sir," cried Mrs. Twankey tearfully. "You get attached to a bit of furniture when your family has owned it for five hundred years."

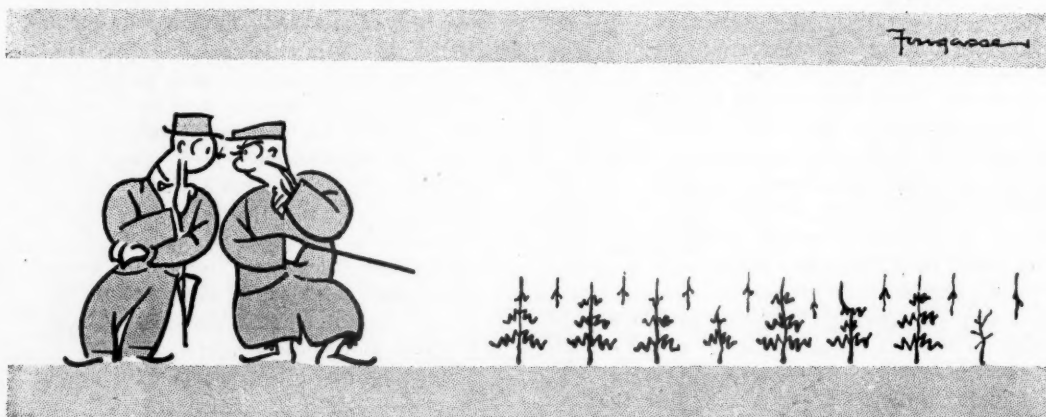
"Well, I'll tell you what I'll do," said the stout gentleman, who couldn't bear to be worsted, "I'll give you forty pounds, cash down."

"Done!" cried Mrs. Twankey, bringing her fist down on the table with a blow that set the tea-cups rattling. So the stout gentleman, who turned out to be a bookmaker, counted out eight five-pound notes and gave her his card and said he would send for the dresser in a day or two. And when he had had his tea he got into his big motor-car and drove away.

Soon after he had gone Mrs. Twankey's son Jack came bicycling home from college and she told him all that had happened. "You have done very well, Mother," he said, "and now you must leave the rest to me. This is where you will reap the benefit of the college education you have worked so hard to give me."

For Jack was a good son to his mother; and the next day, which was a Saturday, he took a day off from college and, getting up early, he put on his best suit and bicycled over to see the stout gentleman at the address given on his card.

He got there just as the stout gentleman was finishing his breakfast. "I have come, Sir," he said, "on a most important piece of business." And he went on to explain that he was the junior partner in a big London firm of art



"... AND SHOULD WAR THREATEN, HERE THEY ARE READY AT A MOMENT'S NOTICE TO BE MADE INTO DESKS FOR THE HEADS OF ALL THE NEW GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS."

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"CAN YOU TELL ME WHERE THEY KEEP THE DOMESDAY-BOOK?"
 "No, Miss. HAVE YOU TRIED THE STALL OVER THERE?"

dealers. For years he had been scouring the country looking for a certain dresser which was supposed to be the very one at which Magna Carta had been signed. It was known to have been taken away after the ceremony by the Earl of Twankey and it was believed to be still in that family's possession. And last night, he said, he had discovered it at the house of a certain Mrs. Twankey, near Bilbury, only to find that it had been sold a few hours earlier to the stout gentleman.

"That's right," said the stout gentleman.

"Well, we'll give you anything you like for it," said young Jack.

"What's your offer?" asked the stout gentleman.

"How about four hundred pounds?"

"Make it eight."

"All right, then," said young Jack; and after he had

given a bogus address he went on his way, whistling cheerfully, and bicycled back into Bilbury.

When he got there he went to see one of the reporters of *The Bilbury Argus*, and he told him all about the discovery of the very dresser at which Magna Carta had been signed. And he said that a poor widow had sold it yesterday for forty pounds to a stout bookmaker who had promptly gone and got eight hundred for it from a London firm.

And after the reporter had rung up the stout bookmaker to make sure, he wrote out the whole story, and it appeared on the front page of that evening's *Bilbury Argus*. And there was also a strongly-worded leading article warning people not to sell their priceless family heirlooms until they had been properly valued.

And the next morning, which was a Sunday, the Vicar of Bilbury preached a sermon in which he pointed out



"I NEVER SAID I LOOKED LIKE AN 'AWK, GEORGE; ALL I SAID WAS I'D GOT EYES LIKE AN 'AWK."

that the fatherless and widows were still the prey of ravening wolves in plus-four clothing, who went about taking their birthright for a mess of pottage. And everyone agreed that it was a disgraceful thing for a stout bookmaker to give no more than forty pounds for the very dresser at which Magna Carta had been signed. And after that they all got into their motor-cars and hurried up to the widow's cottage in the hope of picking up some more bargains.

And it was soon clear that the whole cottage was absolutely crammed with heirlooms. The dining-room chairs had been in the family for five hundred years; but the widow pointed out that they weren't worth much because two of them had been broken in the argument between LAMBERT SIMNEL and PERKIN WARBECK and had never been properly mended. And one of the easy-chairs had never been the same since MARY QUEEN OF SCOTS had spilt a cup of soup over it when she was imprisoned in Twankey Castle. But the brass bedstead where QUEEN ELIZABETH had slept, the water-tub which was supposed to be the very wine-cask in which the Duke of CLARENCE was drowned, and the chair in which JOHN WESLEY used to sleep on Sunday afternoons were all in their original condition.

Now the people of Bilbury were not very good at history, but they knew that museums and suchlike places often paid quite a bit of money for just this sort of stuff. However, they saw no reason why they should tell the widow that. So they began bidding up hard for the furniture and it wasn't long before every stick of it had been sold for a very nice fat sum indeed—but remarkably reasonable when you counted in its great historical value.

And when everything else had gone Mrs. Twankey took down the picture of Mr. Twankey in his Masonic regalia and sold it for ten pounds to Alderman Jackson, after she had explained that it was a photograph of the Duke of WELLINGTON, taken on the field of Waterloo and that it had been presented to her great-grandfather for saving his life.

And if you go to that cottage now you will find that it has been turned into the Mary Queen of Scots Tea Room and Junk Shop. All the waitresses are dressed in Elizabethan costume, and two or three times a week Mrs. Twankey's brother-in-law at the sham-antique factory delivers some historic piece of furniture at the back-door to be sold on commission.

But Mrs. Twankey and her son Jack now live down in Bilbury in a semi-detached villa, where their fumed-oak sideboard and brown plush drawing-room suite are the envy of all their neighbours. And they drive up every day to the cottage in a motor-car.

And Mrs. Twankey says that every mother ought to try to give her son a college education, because it is bound to repay her in the end.

H. W. M.

"Shawi-el-din, Public Nuisance No. 1 in Palestine, is no ordinary Arab. He is a man of some education, the author of two or three Arabian plays, and a writer of extreme views. He is tall, spare, of somewhat forbidding appearance; does not smoke or drink, and is a strict vegetarian. He is a firm believer in himself and in his destiny."—*Evening Paper*.

To our great relief we learn that Mr. BERNARD SHAW is still in England. He is not *el-din* (the big noise) referred to here.

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(By Mr. Punch's Staff of Learned Clerks)

Knight Unarmed

THOUGH in most of its pages a comparatively trivial record of goings and comings, of moves from one house to another, of anxious partings, happy meetings and long waiting in between, Lady HAIG's volume, *The Man I Knew* (MORAY, 18/-), is successful in its main purpose. A great soldier's wife may not be able to throw much new light on contested issues of strategy or policy, but she can very happily portray the true lover who values her opinion for her own sake, the husband who will promise to be "careful" at the Front, the father who can turn from the appointment of an army commander to consideration of the qualifications of a nursery-governess. Much of the appeal of Earl HAIG's personality rested on his lack of eccentricity—there, but for the touch of military genius, went plain John Smith. It would hardly be possible to offer so intimate a study of a hero without a little taking him at a disadvantage, since even heroes are apt to utter occasional platitudes or to leave Victorian photographs behind them; but if there is something here to be forgiven, the gain in our knowledge of the man himself is greater than the loss.

Islanders All

It is so obvious that ways of life and not standards of living are the basis of happiness that it should not be necessary to go as far as *The Islands of Ireland* (BATSFORD, 10/6) for tangible proof. Yet if only our progress-mongers would accompany Mr. THOMAS H. MASON (preferably in a *currach* or coracle) to Inishmurray and Achill, to Clare and the Blaskets, to the Skelligs, Tory, Saltee and the Aran Islands they would find a people almost destitute of modern clutter, skilled at their own crafts, contented, hospitable, handsome and courageous. This is not to pretend that the islands are so many earthly paradises, like the Hy-Brasil that was their fabulous neighbour. The islanders increase too fast for their means of livelihood, and their present Government has added to their hardships by discouraging English—the passport to emigration—and failing to protect their fishing-grounds. But they have the essentials of right living in those primitive farms; and you have only to look at Mr. MASON's sixteen-score photographs—the spoil of thirty years' devotion to the islands—to realise the validity of the enthusiasm that inspires this delightful book.

Change Partners

A quotation from *Christabel* prefaces Miss MARGARET KENNEDY's new novel, *Together and Apart* (CASSELL, 7/6),



"HAS NOTHING BEEN DONE ABOUT THIS?"

"YES, SAH."

"WHAT HAS BEEN DONE?"

"NOTHIN', SAH."

from which we gather that to be wroth with one we love doth indeed work like madness in the brain, and that nothing can wholly do away with the marks of what once has been. Indeed there seems little enough reason at first for *Betsy Canning's* decision to seek a divorce. *Alec*, her husband, had been an inconspicuous civil servant but had suddenly blossomed into a sort of GILBERT to the SULLIVAN of *Johnnie Graham*, which turned him into a different proposition altogether. *Betsy* did not like his new theatrical friends, nor did she desire to be known merely as *Alec Canning's* wife; besides which, his new friends and a general desire for popularity incited him to drink. Still, they might have come together again had it not been for various friends—those "whispering tongues that poison truth"—and perhaps especially the two mothers. Also *Betsy* was beginning to feel that her youth was rapidly fading, and her cousin *Max*, Lord St. Mullins, was eager to

take her off *Alec's* hands if she got a divorce. *Max* was a family joke, but he was wealthy and very much in love. So, this pleasant arrangement having come to her husband's ears, he runs away with *Joy Benson*, who is a sort of holiday governess, and *Betsy* duly becomes a countess. This novel is not perhaps one of Miss KENNEDY's best, but she depicts the effects of the divorce and subsequent marriages on the children with a good deal of insight.

A Doctor Continues to Tell.

Dr. HALLIDAY SUTHERLAND's third scrap-book has much of the astonishing variety and high dramatic quality which made *The Arches of the Years* and *A Time to Keep* such satisfying and original companions. He tells a story in a terse, objective and yet vivid way that is all his own and almost always effective; and he can still find enough surprising incidents in his life, left over from the two former books, to make *In My Path* (GEOFFREY BLES) well worth half-a-guinea. But the supply is clearly running thin. The second half of the book consists of an excursus on tuberculosis and three satirical fables. The former will interest many, but it will alarm, I imagine, still more—perhaps that is the author's intention, for he lays great stress on the importance of detecting and treating the disease in its early stages. Of the latter, "Woes of the Rich," which tilts at the horrors of over-organisation in the super-hotel, is fairly successful, but the other stories have neither originality of idea nor impressiveness in execution. Fantasy is not Dr. SUTHERLAND's strong point—which is by way of being a compliment to an autobiographical writer.

Farewell, Manchester

It was an excellent notion to write a novel round the rise and fall of the cotton trade, but *Sand Castle* (HODDER AND STOUGHTON, 8/6) strikes me as at once too undistinguished and too refined. It relates in a pleasant go-as-you-please fashion the fortunes of an old Lancashire family of mill-owners and their two Highland clerks. Manchester suburbs—from the eighties to the present day—are justly depicted: cotton with a whiff of intelligentsia (Owens College) and no more than a hint of the really interesting German-Jewish culture of the period. But where are the clogs and shawls? *Alan* and *David*, after a cleverly-contrived *début* in fog and a four-wheeler, jog along to the Boer war between the romantic old house of

the head of the firm, their lace-curtained lodgings and the office. They are a rather conventional brand of the good and idle apprentice, just as *Annis* is the typical master's daughter of prentice aspiration. The causes, domestic and foreign, that see the closing of the mills are soundly indicated; but Miss JANET BEITH's Manchester has neither the delicacy nor the vigour of Mrs. GASKELL'S.

The Murder of a Miser

In *The Brothers Sackville* (COLLINS, 7/6) the two COLES, G. D. H. and M., are perfectly fair in giving their readers an opportunity to solve the puzzle that perplexed young *Inspector Fairford*. Indeed to my mind this is a model story of its kind, for the mystery surrounding *John Ainsworth's* death never flags, and the authors have been entirely

successful in giving individuality to every one connected with it. Especial praise is earned by their police, who, from *Superintendent Wilson* of Scotland Yard to an amiable local constable, are always human. Perhaps the COLES may have disliked the virago who inherited *Ainsworth's* property so intensely as to make her snobbishness and folly almost incredible. But even if this is granted they have still to be congratulated on the double feat of combining a sound tale with a fairly-stated and sufficiently baffling problem.



"I'VE LOOKED ALL THROUGH THOSE CHRISTMAS-CARDS, BUT THERE'S NOTHING QUITE SUITABLE."

"WHO DO YOU WANT TO SEND IT TO?"

"OUR SERGEANT-MAJOR."

"Arrow of Desire"

Mr. RUPERT CROFT-COOKE, in *Darts* (GEOFFREY BLES, 2/6), may have done more to popularise the game than he intended. It is true that he wishes to gain converts, but before setting out on this crusade he tells us that "Darts began, and should continue, as a working-man's game. It has no place outside the public bar." I agree that a public-house is the natural home of darts as the village green is of cricket, but at the same time it seems to me that Mr. CROFT-COOKE's enthusiasm will have helped considerably to make it popular here, there and everywhere. For the rest I am in favour of Mr. CROFT-COOKE and of the game, although not everyone perhaps will share his opinion that it is "the most fascinating flower of all competitive pastimes."

A new book of sketches by "SNAFFLES" is an event for all lovers of horses. *More Bandobast* (COLLINS, 25/-) is a record of sport in the East—India mostly, with side-glances at Aden and Somaliland. A dozen colour plates and innumerable pencil-sketches show "SNAFFLES" at his delightful best as draughtsman and humorist.

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